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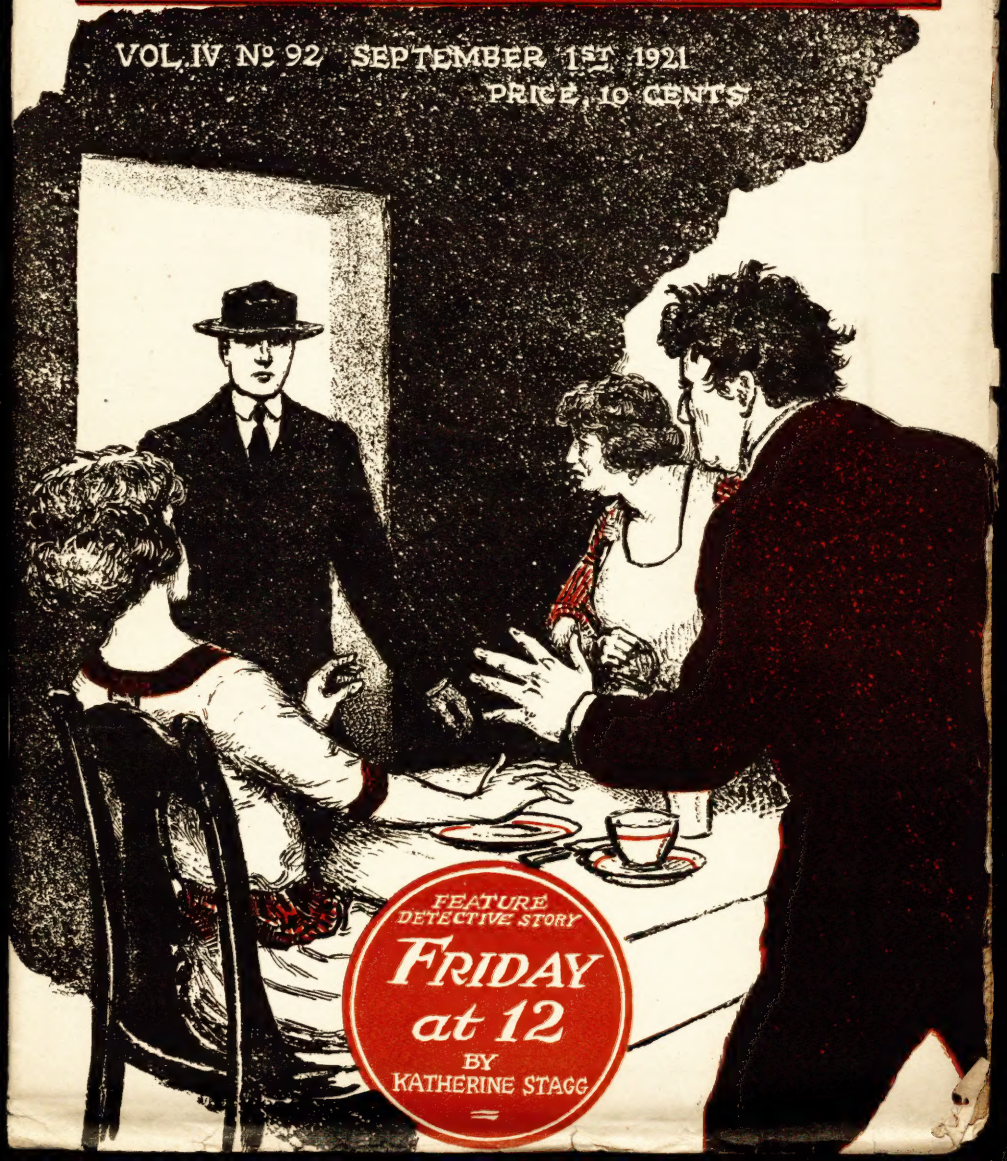
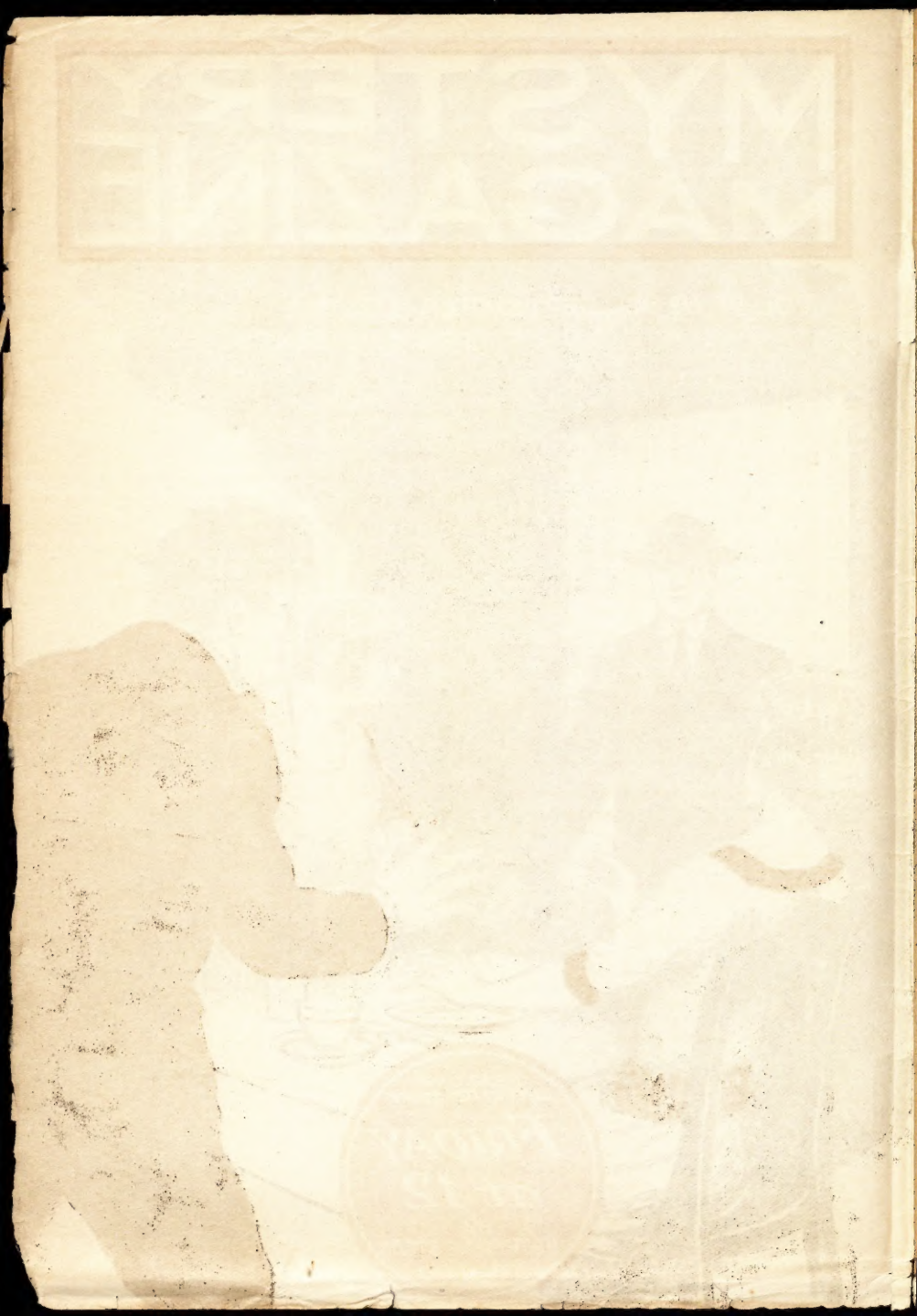


FEATURE DETECTIVE STORY

FRIDAY at 12

BY KATHERINE STAGG



A Detective Story in Our Next Number—"By the Left Hand." Read It!

MYSTERY MAGAZINE

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FRIDAY AT 12

By KATHERINE STAGG

PROLOGUE

ON a bright January morning fifteen years ago, three young people ran up the steps of a brown stone house in East Fifty-sixth Street, New York. Two were dapper youths, and the third was a lovely girl, lithe, dark, and vivid, with the glow of overflowing vitality.

All were dressed brilliantly, in a way that betokened their theatrical profession, and they made a bright picture against the snowy street.

The youngest of the men, a mere boy then, has since reformed, as he laughingly says of his stage beginnings when they are recalled, and he is now Johnny Lewis, the entirely dependable detective, so valued by Headquarters.

But his little experience as an actor has not been without help to him in his subsequent career.

The house was that of Dr. Carleton Simon, even then noted as a criminologist and alienist, and equally notable as a deep student of experimental science along the less known paths of the power of light rays on nerve centres, and many other abstruse subjects. He had been one of the original graduates of Charcot at the Nancy school of hypnotism, and had done much in that line, while deprecating the public opinion of the semi-quackery of hypnotism.

To-day Dr. Simon has come into his own, so to speak, and no scientist in the world is more seriously regarded, although his unique gifts have been most vigorously used by the Chief Commisioner of the Narcotic Squad. His work is like a huge net spread over the country, accomplishing astonishing results.

Always a busy man, yet always finding time to do a kindly act, Dr. Simon had consented to give the trio of thespians some points on hypno-

tism for a play they were to appear in at an early date.

The play was one of the old-fashioned melodramas of the ten-twenty-thirty kind, authentic parents of the vaudeville and movies of to-day.

After some explanation of the plot, they proceeded to enact a murder scene, where Johnny—then known as Loris La Madrid, a name he shudders at now as flagrant youthful folly—was the obliging victim, a man supposed to be seventy years old. Herbert Kent used his hypnotic power to make Florine, the girl, perform the murder.

They were a crude set of youngsters, and the personality of Dr. Simon towered so above them that even to their ignorance and inexperience the scene really had a sinister quality—for vibrant power will make itself felt under all circumstances.

Dr. Simon in his early manhood was an unforgettable figure; over the medium height, and very erect, his sinewy movements, and free play of muscles under perfect control, gave him a peculiarly panther-like quality. His jet black hair, and eyes, and Van Dyke beard made him the absolute embodiment of the personified Mephisto in power, but without the evil suggestion. His eyes, particularly, could change at will to the most eloquent "windows of the soul," or become opaque glistening wells that told no tales of the thought of the owner while forcing the inmost secrets of his subject.

The ideal hypnotist in appearance, but all his forces were so controlled by mental equipoise that one felt he never would misuse his power.

The true scientist is ever jealous of the serious nature of his vocation, and Dr. Simon was most emphatic in his statements that no one could be hypnotized into committing a crime unless they were potential criminals, so the little rehearsal soon developed into a lecture, and the actors felt the puerile nature of their errand, but knew they had gained something rich in human experience.

This little scene may not seem very relevant to the story of the murder of Israel Kahn, but who knows what strange threads of Destiny are woven in the past that we of to-day find enmeshing us to our cost?

Those four people who enacted this little scene in Dr. Simon's office fifteen years ago went their several ways, little dreaming of the strange future in which they would again be brought together on the same canvas, as it were.

Arachne must be very busy these days weaving the web in which our complex conditions find us entangled.

CHAPTER ONE

JULIA DERING, sweet and seventeen, rang the bell of the second story flat at 3— Audubon Ave. on Washington Heights one night in last September. There was no response. The flat belonged to Israel Kahn, her stepfather, owner of the building; a single twenty-five foot walkup, standing by itself. There were vacant lots on each side, although at the right there was a shanty used as a carpenter shop, with tall trees overshadowing it.

She had spent her vacation in the West with relatives, her mother having died the year before, and was to return to her boarding school the day after arriving in New York. She had intended to make her duty visit in the daytime, but a wreck on the road had detained the train so that it seemed that there was no other way than for her to spend the night in her stepfather's home. She dreaded doing so, for she had always felt an instinctive fear of him, and during her mother's life as Mrs. Kahn, a period of about four years, Julia had been at the flat as little as possible. This fear was not because of their racial differences, her parents having been Americans, but Mr. Kahn was a Frenchman, seventy years of age, who had enlivened his hours of money making by numerous gallantries, and who could never look at a pretty woman or girl without an appraising and appreciative eye.

She knew a sister of his had been keeping house for him, and supposed her late coming would be more awkward than the fact of waking up elderly people at a late hour.

She rang several times, but no sound came from within.

Suddenly screams in a feminine voice rang out on the silent night, seemingly from the flat above, then all was silent again.

She had a key to the flat, but hesitated to use it, for, if the Aunt Sarah she disliked could not be aroused, it might mean that Mr. Kahn was alone in the place.

Julia timidly went up the stairs, wondering if she dared ask shelter from the upper flat which she knew was occupied by a theatrical couple, who were always most cordial on the few occasions that she had seen them, but another volley of screams made her hesitate. Madame Dubois on the top floor was hopelessly deaf, and her daughter was usually away on one of her many trips, business or pleasure, nobody knew.

Going back to the Kahn apartment, which was on the second floor, she waited a long time, rang again, but not a sound came, and finally she summoned courage enough to insert her key.

It had now occurred to her that it was very strange that the old poodle had not barked. The key stuck in the lock, and she wrapped her little lace handkerchief about it to get more force, and struggled away for a moment.

As the door yielded to her efforts, the old clock in the diningroom struck twelve, and the girl shuddered in the dark.

It was the first time in her life she had been out so late alone, and some damp eerie breath of ice-cold air seemed to blow over her as she entered the little hallway.

Fumbling for the electric switch, she dropped the key in her timid nervousness, and holding

tightly to her hand bag she pushed and pushed at the button, but with no more result than had rewarded her efforts at the bell outside.

Julia was a small, brown-eyed girl, with a mass of rippling brown hair that seemed too heavy for her delicate head, and a rose leaf skin that had now paled to a waxen hue.

She continued for a long moment fumbling at the switch, but with no better result. Remembering there would be matches in the kitchen for the gas stove, she stepped lightly through the dark passage, and found her way to the dining-room.

To her surprise the kitchen door was closed and locked.

By this time the little creature was in a panic, and she felt that to penetrate to either of the bedrooms in the darkness was too much for her endurance. She had been conscious of a peculiar odor for some minutes that increased as she came near the kitchen, and this, combined with the sinister quiet and darkness, which was unlike any other darkness she had known in her short life, a darkness peopled with all sorts of suggestion, made the girl feel that the only thing on earth she craved was fresh air under the canopy of the blue sky.

Turning, she retraced her steps to the outer door, and shook the knob in her panicky fear. She felt something soft under her foot, and stooping, she picked up her tiny handkerchief and stuffed it in her coat pocket.

Happily, the outside door did not manifest the refusal to work of all the other things in that grewsome flat, and the girl fled as fast as her little satin pumps—unsuitable for travel, but girls do love satin pumps—would carry her. It was a badly terrified mite who ran down the stairs to the outer world.

As Julia stood clinging to the iron post at the foot of the stoop, the door opened, and a man came out. They eyed each other in mutual alarm, but with what different reasons one may easily guess. Julia thought she saw in him the actor who lived in the flat above the one she had just left, but he pulled his hat over his eyes, and hurried around the corner too quickly for her to be sure, in her agitated condition.

What to do next she could not think.

She could not go to the school and ring them up with such a story; but the safety of people was all she craved for the moment. Like a shadow she flitted to the subway, found a nickel in her thin little purse, and hurried into its impersonal depth—to ride somewhere, anywhere, so she might think.

But thinking only made her more bewildered. She tried to reason with herself, and told herself that her fears had been imaginary. After all, who had so frightened her? Merely an empty flat, and an electric switch that would not work.

Going over this line of thought, she made up her mind to get out at the next station, try to find some place where she could buy a candle and some matches, and return. This seemed sensible and reasonable, but even while she was forcing her mind to do this she became conscious that a couple of young fellows had gotten off twice and gotten on again at the very places where she had changed trains, and were evidently exchanging opinions of her in a jocose spirit that frightened her even more than the loneliness of her wanderings.

At the next stop she waited until the train was almost starting, then flew out of the door, giving these scavengers of the night the slip.

But night birds are numerous and full of curiosity where an unusually pretty girl is concerned.

Almost at once another man pushed nearer and whispered, "Say, girlie, you're going my way, aren't you?"

Poor Julia tried to freeze him with a stare, but her dignity was only an added attraction, for the man smiled indulgently, and, taking her by the arm, continued his sibilant whisper: "Don't kill a fellow with those lovely brown lamps of yours. I don't mean any harm; you look about all in. What say if we stop and find a bite to eat? Papa knows how to be good to little girls; come on." Julia was panic-stricken in a new way, and drew back, but he followed her along the seat, and added, "Now, don't cry; some cruel chap has stood you up, I bet."

Julia could only murmur, "Please let me alone."

"Not on your life; beauty in distress is my specialty. You can't deny that something has gone wrong for you to-night, for you are as white as a little ghost. Now be a good pal, and let me fix up the trouble. Come, we are at Ninety-sixth Street and I know an all-night joint where we can have a nice quiet talk, and find out all about it."

By this time Julia was really crying, and pulled out her dainty handkerchief to cover her quivering lips.

At this action, she saw a look of queer amazement pass over the face of the persistent stranger, and with a muttered

"Wow!" he fled from the train.

Rather wondering at this release, yet too dazed to realize what it might mean, she was about to stuff her bit of lace-trimmed cambric back into her pocket, when she saw to her horror that it was streaked with blood.

Slowly it dawned on her that whatever the perils of this night, she had not fallen or cut herself in any way, and if blood was on her handkerchief, it must have gotten there in the few minutes she had spent in the dark flat uptown. What could this mean? Her mind was a blur of wild ideas and questions.

A young man opposite had been watching her, but in a different way from those voracious fiends who had spoken to her before.

So Johnny Lewis had his first glimpse of little Julia Dering.

CHAPTER TWO

SHE must go back to the flat, so she told herself over and over again, but almost fainted as she recalled the horrible cold air that reeked there with some unknown peril. Then, too, she suddenly remembered that she had not picked up her key when it had fallen from her cold little fingers in the dark hallway. That settled the question of going back before daylight when she could summon help.

She rode on and on, and began to notice that the guard was eyeing her suspiciously, so she changed at the next station.

Repeating these tactics several times, getting off one train and boarding the next without even looking at the destination printed on the car window, she at last noticed the big electric sign, "Grand Central," and once more alighting from the train, she asked a man in uniform to direct her to the ladies waiting-room. To the bewildered girl the great station seemed a labyrinth, but she finally found her way to the lavatory, where she bathed her face and eyes in cold water, and felt a bit more like herself. This might be sanctuary until morning she thought as she cuddled into a chair. But curious attendants seemed everywhere on this long night, so when a maid approached, and asked in a most meaning manner if she wanted any help, Julia lied, and said she was only waiting a few minutes while her friends with whom she was travelling were looking after their baggage; and, tremulously, the girl once more crept out into the cold street.

Johnny Lewis had watched Julia very carefully, and had sized up her panic with that keen judgment which stood him in good stead in many of the cases he had to deal with, for, naturally, he was of an adventurous disposition, and inclined to follow his hunches. This is really the ideal nature for the most successful detective; judgment curbing venturesomeness will go far.

So when Julia emerged from the waiting room, she was met by Johnny's open big blue eyes. Before she realized it, she was taken in hand in a brotherly way, and escorted to the eating room, had a large cup of coffee in front of her, and was telling the story of her fears and doubts. Johnny agreed that a girl seldom had gone through such a night. But Julia was a nice girl; he never doubted that for a moment, and he believed her tale without question. When she had been fortified by food, and they again sought the fresh air of the early morning, he asked her to begin again and go over exactly what she had done and seen in the uptown flat, leaving out all the rest of her wanderings.

"Then, you didn't see or hear anything at all, but you smelled a queer odor coming from the kitchen—is that right?"

"No, I did not hear or see anything, but I know there was something awful there," Julia said.

"You say you dropped your key, and could not find it?"

"I think I did, but I was too frightened to look. I picked up my handkerchief, which I had wrapped around the key, and this is how it was," she replied shudderingly.

Johnny whistled to himself as she held out the blood-soaked bit of cambric. Clearly something had happened.

"Now, Miss Dering, I think that is the name you mentioned, that is an ugly thing for you to be carrying; you take my clean one, and I'll take care of that. I hope you feel that you can trust me. If you do——"

He paused anxiously, and Julia smiled up at him with a look of perfect confidence that Johnny never forgot.

"Well, then, I am going to take you to a hotel where you can rest for a few hours while I will go straight up to this address and investigate."

"Oh, would you, sir? But wouldn't it interfere with your business to spend all that time just for me?"

Johnny smiled again in a boyish way that made him look like a kid not much older than Julia herself.

"It strikes me," he said, "this is my business at present; very much so. Will you be frightened if I tell you that I am a detective?"

Julia's eyes and mouth opened to three large round O's in her surprise as she exclaimed:

"I—I thought detectives were all old and terrible looking, and——" but here words failed her.

"Gee, it's something if you don't find me terrible looking to begin with—I hope some time—but, never mind, we will not anticipate the future."

You will see by this that Johnny was a quick worker in more than one respect.

Ten minutes later Julia had been left in charge of the friendly housekeeper of a small hotel that Johnny knew—with instructions to watch over her carefully.

She little dreamed that she was, in a way, a prisoner. She was tucked in a little white bed with a feeling that there was someone very strong and capable taking the burden of her worries off her pretty shoulders.

And this is as it should be when youth calls to youth.

Somehow Johnny had been so impressed by Julia's story that he felt that even the Subway was all too slow, so a liberal deal was made with a taxi driver, and Johnny sped toward Audubon Ave. through the early morning light. And even if they made no better time than the sub, he could smoke in the taxi—smoking was lots of help when he wanted to think. Luckily, he had slept for a couple of hours the afternoon before, and felt fine as a fiddle as he said to himself.

As he drew up a short distance from the number Julia had given, his quick eye sought the windows of the second floor of the house at 3—. It was broad daylight now, and as he looked a woman's hand opened the old-fashioned shutters,

and hung a bird cage on a large hook outside of the window over which the branches of a tree made a pleasant shade.

"Ho, ho," said Johnny to himself, "so somebody is home, after all. Ye gods! I wonder if that kid had a pipe dream, or maybe she told me the wrong floor."

Every other window in the building was shut tight. However, as he remembered the blood-soaked handkerchief, and the girl's terrified reaction, he felt morally sure the house did hide a mystery.

Following a sudden impulse, he rang the bell three times, a signal ring that he knew many people employed for friends in these walk-up flats. The door was opened at once, and with the light running step of a trained athlete he was at the door as quickly as the person inside could get there.

A tall, gaunt woman of sixty stood in the doorway, looking surprised and none too well pleased at the stranger, it being all too evident by her manner that she had expected some one very different. His first thought was that the signal ring had been his first right guess. What would be next?

The smell of frying sausage and griddle cakes floated out, and Johnny's second thought was that their pungent odor would be quite sufficient to kill any other.

"Is Mr. Kahn in?" Johnny spoke as confidently as though he had most important business with the gentleman, wondering himself just what he would say if that person should put in an appearance.

"Why, Mr. Kahn is not in," she answered.

"When do you expect him?" he came back at once, then with a quick idea, "I have a message from his daughter."

A look of hatred passed over the woman's hard features.

"His stepdaughter, do you mean? You bringing a message from her; kinda queer, looks to me—where is she?"

"With friends downtown; she has had a fright, and maybe Mr. Kahn would like to go to her—go to her help." He paused to see if the idea of Julia being in trouble would appeal to the woman. But she seemed to freeze, tried to close the door in his face, muttering:

"I'll tell him if he comes in, but he is uncertain, and I don't know when it will be. She is at her school, I suppose."

The door was as far as Mr. Lewis' altogether capable foot would let it go, and Johnny's gaze was fixed on the ceiling, for his roving eye had spied some long, dark streaks on the wall that looked remarkably like blood stains. He remembered that Julia had described just the spot in the hallway where she had dropped her key and handkerchief, and the place tallied exactly. With a quick kick of his foot, he threw back a rug and showed a large, dark stain that might have been recently scrubbed.

With a stern change of manner, Johnny showed his badge, as he strode into the flat, pushing the woman back too suddenly for her to resist.

CHAPTER THREE

THE woman Johnny rightly judged to be the Aunt Sarah that Julia had mentioned, but she sullenly refused to answer any and all questions. A few minutes hurried search did not bring to light anything of importance. The flat looked as innocent as any place inhabited by two elderly people could be. Everything was in order, and the quantity of boxes on all the shelves were only such as many old women keep to hoard all sorts of odds and ends, so Johnny made short work of the place. But he took the precaution to use the phone to call up the nearest precinct station, and ask that a couple of policemen should be sent there at once. While he waited for them, he tried again to make the woman talk, and asked her who were the other occupants of the house. She still kept her silence until he mentioned the people on the floor above. He had waited to inquire about them until the last; then her anger for some reason seemed stirred, and she replied with extreme venom:

"They? If you're looking for anything rotten in this place, you'd better go in there, for they are a lot of dirty dope fiends, and I've asked and asked Mr. Kahn, my brother, to put them out. They're low-life creatures. Brr!"

No words could describe the disgust of her tone, and Johnny at once thought better of her, and attributed her sullenness to fright rather than any guilty knowledge.

Two policemen arrived on a run at this juncture, and leaving one in charge, Johnny told the other to follow him upstairs.

The other inmates seemed to be still asleep, and the only sound to be heard besides their steps on the stone stairway was the loud and joyous song of the canary bird singing its matin song outside the window of the Kahn flat.

His suspicion pointed so surely to the flat above that he did not mean to ring, but would make forcible entrance so no one inside could be warned. To his surprise, the door stood open about an inch.

Giving it a push, he charged in full tilt, and there met his gaze a picture so dreadful that even his case-hardened nerves jumped at the sight.

On the floor of the hallway lay the body of a small, elderly man, who had been stabbed again and again, his gay satin waistcoat twisted about his neck as though the fiend who had done this ghastly deed could not even trust the knife wounds to have done their deadly work.

Rigor mortis had set in, and it apparently had been hours since the life had departed from the man's crumpled body. What had been a veritable pool of blood had soaked through the flimsy floor-

ing of the poorly built house, and was almost dried up on the surface. What made the sight still more horrible was that three other people were scattered about the place on divans, one on the floor not far from the murdered man, all of them sleeping heavily; the reeking atmosphere telling its own tale of drug-laden brains.

Did any of them know the grewsome presence of the dead man? What would their awakening be?

The big policeman behind Johnny heaved a sigh that was like a small explosion.

"Say, boss, that is a gosh-blamed awful sight!"

"Good God! I should say so!" Johnny's tone was almost awe-stricken, for his first thought had been—suppose little Julia had really stumbled on this harrowing group, instead of sensing it by the delicate nerve-signals of her supersensitive nature!

Julia! Delicate, high-bred little Julia, stumbling about in the middle of the night in the dark flat below, while the blood was dripping down from this ghastly tragedy, and the girl only a few feet away in the darkness. No wonder that Johnny paled.

Please God, if his efforts could do it, she would never know what she had escaped.

The big policeman was waiting instructions, and for a few seconds Johnny had to literally pull himself together, for the girl stood out Madonna-like against this grim background.

As life itself seemed to make a pause, knowing the weird drama of the scene, the woman on the divan moaned, threw up a beautiful arm over her head, and then spoke in a voice so distinct, yet low and rich, that it seemed like one speaking from some other sphere. "Oh, my darling child, love me, love me, love me!" The voice trailed off in a croon of love murmurs.

Coming just at this moment, it was indescribably eerie.

What had love to do with scenes and people like these?

CHAPTER FOUR

BY late afternoon all the legal formalities had been complied with. The coroner's inquest had been held, and the body removed.

Captain Hugh Riley had taken charge of the case, and Johnny was given free rein to go ahead. He realized that Julia stood in great peril as soon as her midnight visit to the flat should be known. So as soon as he could possibly get away he had sped downtown, found the girl at the hotel where he had installed her, told her as gently as he could of the dreadful thing which had happened, and had advised her to stay there for the present.

This she readily consented to do, as school was out of the question in her frame of mind. He wished above all things not to bring her back to the scene of the tragedy if it could be avoided.

Having arranged this, he shot uptown as fast as the speed laws would admit, for he was all too anxious to be there when the drugged inmates of the third floor flat should be awake to the world sufficiently to be interviewed.

In his hurry to get to Julia, he had paid scant attention to them; but now they were the first objective of his mind.

Naturally the obvious idea was that the murder had been done by one or the other of the addicts while under the influence of opium. But, even so, he reflected, it seemed hardly probable that if one of the company had done this deed, that out of the three people in the flat whom he had found in such deep stupor, that one or the other of them would not have been less susceptible than the rest, and would have been conscious of what must have been a most violent encounter.

No, the open door, the sleeping drug addicts—and they were not amateurs at the game, he felt sure from the look of the place he had glimpsed—no, it looked like a plant to him.

Knowing that concealment might only make it worse for Julia, he made haste to tell Captain Riley of her visit of the night before, as soon as he was admitted to the presence of that officer.

Captain Riley frowned at this bit of information; then, seeing Johnny's worried look, allowed himself a shrewd smile, and said:

"Rather a risk, my boy; how do you know she won't make a getaway of it?"

Johnny stammered: "She promised me she wouldn't."

"She did, eh? And you think you can depend on that?"

"Sure thing, Cap.; besides, she is too scared to move an inch."

"Well, probably you are right, but we better have her watched to make sure; the kid need not know it," he added as he saw Johnny's look of annoyance.

"Just as you say, but she is only a child, and I wouldn't have her know for the world that anyone might think"—the words broke off in a gulp—for there was a lot of the boy still left in Johnny's make-up, and that he was hard hit was plain to be seen.

After a moment, Johnny inquired in his best business tone, "Just who are the rest of the people in the house? I meant to be here in time for the inquest, but I just had to go down and see to the girl."

"Yes, yes," replied Riley, "but you had better hot-foot it over there now, and see what you can nose out. The house is well guarded, and the orders are that no one is to leave it at present. I did not care to make any formal arrests until we had gone over things more thoroughly. Those dopesters were still too loggy to talk, but perhaps by now you can get them going; they are the best bet, of course."

So Johnny rushed from the station around to

Audubon Ave., where he made his first call on the janitress.

She was sitting in her basement kitchen, moodily gazing at the bottom of her teacup at the table, which took up the principal position in the room.

She was a squat, swarthy woman, evidently a Polack or Hun, rather neater than the usual slattern, but now visibly upset by the fact of the house being occupied by the police, those mighty ones of unknown power.

Johnny's blue eyes always brought confidence as well as gave it, and when he asked in his most winning way, "Say, mother, can you spare me a cup of that tea that smells so good?" he knew at once he had found a method of making her talk.

He was something of an expert in broken English, and in ten minutes he had gotten a fair account of the residents of the house. The top floor was occupied by Madame Dubois and her daughter, who traveled for a millinery house, and who was now absent on one of her trips. Johnny mentally scratched them off the list of probabilities.

The third floor, where the body had been found, had been rented furnished only a few weeks ago by a theatrical couple named Kent. The woman was sick, and had a nurse, whose name the janitress did not know. Suspicious, he muttered to himself, but not specially so, nor conclusive by any means.

The second floor was used by the owner, Mr. Israel Kahn, and his sister. Mr. Kahn had been a good landlord—generous, but a terrible fellow after women, the old woman told him in a matter-of-fact way.

The ground floor had been lived in by a couple of men who she thought were brothers; name of Ahjed—she showed him the name on a rent receipt before he could get it from her queer pronunciation. They dealt in rugs and images and things of all sorts in a shop they had downtown. Turks, he surmised, and worth investigating; Turks might do anything.

And the basement was theirs, just herself and husband, no children; her husband worked outside, and she did most of the work about the house. Her husband worked for a butcher, but at night often harangued street crowds on corners, as he was very religious. He had been converted two years back, and she pointed with pride at the framed texts on the walls. His name was Henry, and they had been in the house for the past seven years.

So over a cup of tea he had gotten the personnel of the inmates with very little local color thrown in, for the woman spoke poor English, and was stolid to an unusual degree.

He was just going when it occurred to him that she had not even mentioned Aunt Sarah in the Kahn flat.

On asking her about this, she refused to make any statement, hiding behind her lack of language as such creatures will when questioned about anything they do not wish to talk about.

This looked a little queer, but might only be a sullen fit over some neglected cleaning, and perhaps a scolding from the owner's sister which was resented, but he made a mental note of it, just the same.

Slipping a yellow bill into her willing hand, which brought the first glimmer of a smile to her dark face, he left the basement and started up the stairs.

Summing up his information, he said to himself:

"It must lie between the dope hounds, the Turks, or the woman known so far only as Aunt Sarah."

Anna, the janitress, had not known her other name, and he recollected that she had made a very sudden appearance in the flat, if she had not been there the night before when Julia could get no response to her rings. Worth looking into, anyhow; she would probably benefit by the death of her brother, and that gave at least a motive. But this, being such a brutal class of murder, was more likely to be one of either jealousy or revenge. Israel Kahn, with all his seventy years, was a woman chaser, so much so that even his janitress mentioned the fact quite casually. So the record of his more recent amatory exploits would be likely to give the best clue.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE word had been passed that Johnny Lewis was on the job, and, young as he was, he had a fine record and great admirers on the force. When he entered the flat of the Turks without ceremony, the man in charge only grinned and muttered:

"Go to it, you'll find a slick gang here."

The living room of this flat was furnished rather ornately with a veritable arsenal of weapons in several cabinets, heavy draperies, and stuffed chairs of huge dimensions. The two brothers, slim, dark men of wiry, nervous manner, very much alike, had not been allowed to leave the house, and were pacing the floor and smoking prodigiously—the place was black with it, and so were the scowling faces of the two men. Johnny greeted them in his most affable manner, which was only acknowledged by curt nods and increased rapidity of their serpentine movements up and down the length of the room.

A hasty trip through the flat showed an inner room piled high with rugs rolled and sealed as if just imported

Johnny had a nice taste in rugs, which he could only afford to indulge vicariously at present, so he had a mind to request a nearer view of some of these. At the same time he was so anxious to get to the third floor, where the body had been found, that he gave them but a superficial

glance. He was about to go on when his quick eye caught a bright gleam of something that was remarkably like glass in the end of one, where some carelessness had torn the outside sealed covering.

He walked over to it coolly and tipped over the entire lot.

The taller of the two men had been following him closely, and sprang for him; he would have had him at grips in a second, but Johnny pushed an automatic in his ribs.

"Here, Mike," yelled Johnny, "take these two fellows in charge. Bottles in rugs are the business of the narcotic squad, and that is small-fry work when we are looking for murderers."

"Take it easy, you chaps—that little game is up."

Even a small gun is a vital argument when handled right.

It had been a trying moment, for he had seen the other brother with a nasty looking knife coming from behind where a mirror had shown him. An Irish policeman in action will subdue knife work pretty effectually when fear is already doing its nerve-racking work. Johnny paused in the hall to light a cigarette, then went on his way to the upper floor.

The canary still sang outside the window of the Kahn flat, and somehow its sweet song made Johnny think of Julia. He wished he could get down to see her and reassure her, but he must see all these people first.

This encounter with the Turks made it look ugly for them, for they had the weapons handy enough, and they were none too good for the deed. But the motive was lacking so far, unless, perhaps, some female of their own kind had attracted the old man—yes, that might be easy. Still, Turks were not likely to care enough for any woman to do this kind of murder for her sake. Greed would be more in their line. He must find out if the old man was apt to carry large sums of money.

At this moment he stopped and shook himself impatiently; he had not thought to get a description from Julia of the man she had seen leaving the house the night before. What an ass he had been, but at the time he had more than half believed her story to be the imagination of a frightened child.

The officer at the door of the third floor flat greeted him eagerly.

"Say, boss, the cuckoos have come to, and are jabbering about someone trying to use a knife on the woman last night, but they are all talking at once, and I can't make head or tail of it."

With a curt nod, Johnny pushed into the room, not stopping even to glance at the hallway, for he felt that the scent was getting closer.

A strange scene met his eye. And a very surprised fellow he was, too, for seated at the dining table were three people, one man and two women, eating their six o'clock in the evening breakfast. In two of them he recognized the man as no other than Herbert Kent, the actor, in whose company several years ago Johnny had played juveniles parts, and with whom he had gone to Dr. Simon's office to get some instructions on hypnotism for use in their play.

Another glance—could it be possible that the wreck of a woman on the farther side of the table was Florine?

More beautiful than in her youth, but a shadow of herself, so attenuated and marble pale, she looked more like a piece of statuary than a human being.

The other woman was a stout creature of dissipated blowsiness, evidently the maid or nurse, for she was waiting on them.

"Well, well, old-timer, this is a queer meeting; Florine, look who's here!" Kent's tone was jovial. It struck a ghastly note to Johnny, knowing the circumstances, and wondering how much they knew of them.

"I'll be jiggered! Florine, and you, Bert." Johnny felt his greeting inadequate, but he really was floored for the instant.

"Say, have a drink, old man," Bert went on, and it was evident that a bottle figured prominently in the breakfast menu; "what is being pulled off here, anyhow, with the uniformed guy talking about some murder or other; what's up?"

The pale faces, the trembling hands, and the strained voices all told the tale that these people were far from normal yet after hitting the pipe the night before, for it had no doubt been a heavy debauch, and they were still feeling it.

Florine spoke for the first time.

"I couldn't place you at first, but now I know; aren't you an actor now?"

"Hardly; I'm by way of being a detective," smiled Johnny, but with meaning, wondering if that announcement would show any results of fear in this strange trio.

"Oh, are you?" said Florine quietly. "I've been telling Bert that a man tried to murder me last night, and he won't believe me."

"Florine!" the voice was so sharp that it startled Johnny, "stop it, at once, do you hear?" A lifted hand was pointed at her, and without another word the woman cringed in her chair.

Well, here was a funny thing—could old Bert Kent have had anything to do with the deed of last night, for he had shown his old hypnotic power over the woman, and she had responded on the instant. Small wonder, too, with that wild stare that was still in his deep-set eyes.

Speaking as lightly as he could, Johnny said: "Cut out the professional stunts, old chap. What does Florine know about last night?"

Bert seemed to pull himself together, but replied easily enough:

"You know, we do take a smoke now and then, and the rosy dreams are all to the good. But the girl here isn't very well just now, and she gets out of hand sometimes, and thinks she sees things. That's all there's to it."

"But there was a murder committed here last night."

Johnny let him have it full force, for he judged rightly that he had not really believed what the police had said, or possibly they had not told them yet, thinking they might give themselves away if unwarned.

Bert jumped up, the bottle in his hand, but it fell to the floor and smashed into fragments, while he stood there, paling more and more, a perfect picture of guilt.

Florine fell back in her chair, while the nurse poured coffee in a steady stream over the table cloth.

At this juncture, a noise arose in the back of the house, and presently one of the policemen put his head in the door and shook his head significantly.

"One of these birds tried to get away down the fire escape, boss, but we pinched her."

"Who?" asked Johnny breathlessly.

"The old woman from the Kahn flat—his sister, I b'lieve."

"Is she hurt?"

"Naw—only lost her wig, 'n' elbows scraped."

"See to her until I get downstairs; watch her if she tries to put anything else over; step lively now."

This was interesting information, but first Johnny wanted to know just what was the story Florine could tell of the night before.

Followed a third degree ordeal that was like nightmare, for so mixed were the drug dreams with what seemed to have been real that Johnny shook his head over it, and felt more balled up than ever. Bert, too, was constantly interfering until Johnny had to call one of his men and have the actor taken to another part of the house, but with strict orders that he must not be lost sight of.

Johnny spent a solid hour grilling the woman, and they were both pretty much worn out when it was over, but a ray of hope lighted the officer's mind from what he had learned.

After a conference with the captain who officially had the case in charge, he walked for half an hour to clear his brain and mull over the different angles of the situation.

"Sure, Mike, it looks like all angles," he muttered to himself. But a scheme was in his mind, and he felt that he was on the trail in deadly earnest, and that without dragging Julia into it at all.

What could the girl be doing now? It must have seemed a terribly long day to her.

Before putting his plan in action, he really must phone her and see if she was all right.

Calling the hotel, he asked to be connected with the party he had left to watch out for any trouble that might possibly come from outside, although he had felt really no need for it. The girl was too timid to stir without his instructions.

But the hotel clerk said she had left an hour before with a man in a taxi who had been sent by Mr. Lewis himself. Johnny yelled through the phone that was impossible, for he was Mr Lewis. The clerk insisted that the young lady said the man was from her uncle's house, that she knew him well, and that the message must be genuine, and she must go to the house to be with her aunt. Such she said were the orders of her detective friend, etc., etc., until Johnny almost blew up in disgust.

CHAPTER SIX

WHO had gone after Julia? Who that Julia knew? Some man from the Kahn house, they had said. What man?

Where should Johnny look for her? Without one clue, where in all this vast city should he search?

This was about the worst half-hour Johnny ever put in, and then he reached a decision so heroic that it did credit to his strength of mind.

He had formed a theory of the murder, and had made a plan to catch the murderer. If he threw aside this plan to look anywhere and everywhere for Julia, it might only waste precious time.

If his theory was correct, she was in no danger of her life, but would be hidden by the maniac Johnny suspected.

But could he go through the long night without knowing her place of concealment, and the circumstances of her plight?

He had gone back to the house, and sat down on the steps of the low stoop. Here he spent the next half-hour, using all his faculties and experience, while he felt that the latter did not help him much, for this kind of crime was outside of any that he had hitherto known.

He thought hard, smoked hard, and prayed hard. There are many ways of praying. That canary outside of the Kahn flat prayed in its way when the golden shower of song came from its little throbbing throat. The dray horse in the street prayed in its way when it labored up the hills, doing its duty at the behest of man. And Johnny put his whole soul in his wordless prayer for Julia's safety.

It was getting dark by this time, and suddenly he saw on a building one word flash out that seemed to him a sign straight from the spirit world, for the big electric spelled the one word "SAFE." Whatever the advertisement might be, the rest of it was cut off by the intervening houses, but that one word carried its message to him in his overwrought condition.

His next action might indeed have puzzled the onlooker, for he went swiftly to a theatrical boarding house that he knew in his capacity of detective, and had an interview with the woman who kept it. He promised the woman the sum of one hundred dollars if she would let him have one of her boarders—a girl who was bright

enough to follow his instructions literally for a couple of hours.

A vaudeville performer named Maudie was handed over to him, and he had a long talk with her before they parted.

His last words were:

"Now, you understand me, don't you? You must get acquainted with him when about a block from the house to-night."

The girl nodded her consent, but seemed half puzzled at such a strange order. The police are all powerful she knew, however, and she timidly stood a moment where he had left her, as if wondering if she should run away. But, with a shrug of her shoulders, she evidently concluded it were best to go through with the affair, even if she did not understand the game.

Going back to Audobon Ave. Johnny walked slowly, pondering on all this strange tangle of vice and its results. One thing, he had made a big haul in the drug gang, for the narcotic men had reported that many thousand dollars worth of both heroin and opium had been found in the Turk's flat. Nothing had been removed, however, for, as long as so many people were possible suspects, and no known weapon had been found, things should be left as nearly as they were when the body was discovered. Instead of there being no clue or loophole as happened in many cases, here there were so many suspicious things connected with the various occupants of the flats, that it was a matter of too many trails to know which one to follow.

As Johnny turned the corner nearest the house, he almost collided with a running figure.

A gasp, a little cry, and Julia fell into his arms.

A stifled exclamation from the astonished man, and he saw winking over his shoulder the same electric sign, like the eye of some queer monster that had guessed his state of mind. To his hurried questions, she said that she had been called for in a taxi by a man with a written message from him, but, when she got into the cab, she began to think it might have been the wrong thing to do, even though she knew the man came from the house at 3— Audubon Ave. And when they had been stopped by some traffic regulation, she had jumped from the further side of the taxi and run for the nearest Subway station. Her move had been so totally unexpected that she quickly lost herself in the crowd.

Johnny cursed, thanked God, and hugged her all in one comprehensive breath, forgetting that at this hour of the day before he had never set eyes on the brown-eyed beauty.

Now she seemed to be part of him—the only thing in the world worth living for. Julia, too, had lived so hard in these few hectic hours, that she did not realize that it was love that had come to her, but accepted it gladly.

"And now, who was this man?" The voice was stern.

Julia whispered a name.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE street crowd who had been listening to a wild religious exhortation at the corner of One Hundred and Eighty-first street dispersed, and a lone figure hurried northward on the avenue.

He was tall, powerful, with long arms and bullet head.

He walked rapidly for several blocks until the street seemed quite deserted; he increased his pace to a lope, animal-like in its motion, when the girl "Maudie" stepped from a doorway and spoke to him. He stopped short and glared at her.

Then he made to go on, but she kept up with him, speaking in a low voice, insisting that a man wanted to see him on important business.

Twice he shook his head at her, but she persisted.

This colloquy lasted for half a block, she hanging to his arm finally, when suddenly with one push of his great hands she fell over the edge of the stone walk, and clung panting to the fence of the vacant lot that skirted the house at 3— Audubon Ave. Several other figures might have been seen creeping up, but the man was too much excited to notice them.

With a maniac yell he clutched the girl and pulled a knife from his pocket. Then a whistle blew, and he was surrounded by strong arms, and plenty of them.

They overpowered him, although he fought with the force of a dozen men, but his cries still rang out, "Ye shall all perish. I—I am sent into the world to cleanse it. Ye scoundrels and crooks, ye shall perish!" A few good hard whacks from the night sticks, and yet one more cry rang out:

"You've broken my head!"

Johnny's trick had worked. It was the very religious janitor who had started to be the avenging scourge of God in his benighted fanaticism. The way the job was done told Johnny that a maniac or a fanatic did it, and by watching the religious crank the detective concluded that he was the culprit.

The murder of Israel Kahn had been the first of his crimes, and but for the acumen of Johnny Lewis there might have been many another victim of the crazy man's delusion.

He confessed that had been his beginning, and that he had dragged the body into the Kent flat the night before, meaning to clean out the dope fiends, too, but the sound of Julia going down the stairs had made him postpone the further purification of the house, as he called it, for another time.

When the whole story became clear, Johnny actually went down on his knees in thankfulness for the escape of the beautiful girl who would henceforth be his most sacred care.

The Rainbow Lure

By MARIE LOSCALZO

LATE morning sunshine tried to chase the gloom from the room where Cora Shepard ranged in restless impatience. Her too old young face was white where the carelessly applied rouge did not light false fires, and her usually carefully dressed brown hair was rough and tumbled. The soiled kimono she held about her by one twitching hand was torn at the shoulder to show unbelievably white skin, as soft as any petted lady's.

As the door swung open she snapped querulously:

"'S a fine time to bring breakfast——" and stopped short as a tall man gently closed the door behind him.

"Not your old Katie with the toast, my fine girl, but your Corrigan with a jolt for you. Katie had hers when I made her let me in—now—let's see."

Cora did not answer, but turning her back, went to gaze unseeing out of the window—at least there was freedom there.

"Might as well be sweet about it, Cora, for you know we have been watching you night and day. And you might as well come clean with all the dope on the Westerman girl's murder, for we have your friend Frank, and we'll get your brother Bill, too. But listen, now; if Frank would give us a nice neat little confession, we could see the way clear to forgetting a lot of things—such as your look-in with the Norton blackmail, the Hotaling forgery, and so on. We know your brother is guilty as hell, of course, and you know it, too, but the thing is to get the proof.

"And how the papers are roasting the chief, and the whole department. Somebody's gotta be the goat, that's all. We've sure got the pan hot, and gotta have somebody to fry.

"Give us time and we could hang the murder on your brother, but time is one little thing we ain't got, with the papers and the public, too, yapping on our heels.

"Now, listen here, sister, do me a favor, and save yourself—and save Bill—from the chair. Y'see, this Frank of yours is crazy to see you—why, I don't know, for he was loony about the Westerman girl. Fact is, that's why we can slam the murder on him so dead easy. He was there that night, we know, but your brother was there, too, after Frank. But we can't find a witness, that is, a witness that's any good, for what you say wouldn't go far with a jury—and you Frank's common-law wife.

"So there's only one thing that'll clear your brother, and that is for Frank to come clean with a confession. That'll give you and your no-'count brother time to clear out. No doubt Frank will only be sent up for a few years—some soft governor will let him out. It's your only chance, Cora, for I tell you we've got a bad case on Bill."

The detective sauntered to the window, where he stood by Cora's side, looking out, for a moment.

Suddenly she flung away from him as if he was poisonous.

"Get out of here! When I want to see Frank, I know where he is, and as for a fake confession, I'm not your stool-pigeon, Corrigan!"

"Fake? How'd you get that way? How'd you know he didn't kill the Westerman girl? Believe me, my fine girl, he thought enough more of her than he did of you—enough to kill her if he thought she was double-crossing him. You know what he cared for your tantrums. Yeh! and for you, and what name you had left, too! Why, he used to lay bets on you—down in Tony's—bets—God, how rotten a guy can get! And you think he loved you? Say, that's the limit! I've seen Frank Conroy kissing the paper that had Ruth Westerman's *name* on it—after he had made *your* name one that——"

He paused, for the fury in Cora's eyes startled him.

Hoarsely she muttered: "All right—bring him along. I'll find out—find out——"

The detective looked pleasantly cheerful as he swung about to open the door. The bell had been ringing some minutes, but Cora's maid was too terrified by Corrigan's authority to answer.

"Ah! Here we are!"

Two plain-clothes men entered with a handcuffed man between them.

"Morning, Frank. Lil' call on Cora, eh? You're the boy for the early visits to your lady friends, what? Cora here is all out of sorts, because I'm just telling her she's booked for a trip up the river; her and that no-good brother Bill of hers. Queer how you guys expect to get away with things. Cora's been the queen blackmailer of Riney the Rat's gang for too long, and now Bill goes and croaks *your* jane, Frank! Some speed to Bill's trip to the chair, I'll say!"

Corrigan seemed pleased with his little monologue, and after a glance at Cora, whose back was turned, seated himself comfortably in an arm-chair.

"Now, boys," he said to the plain-clothes men, "you can beat it out a while. I'll manage this little seance. The main thing is to let the lady and the gent have a farewell chew."

The men let themselves out, and Corrigan yawned.

"Well, folks, speak up! Can't you say 'day-day' to Frank, Cora? I ain't got all day to hang around. If you got anything to say, get it over. Me, I'm all in. I'll just park myself on that lounge I lamped in the back room as I came through the kitchen a bit ago. Give you half an hour for your love spiel," and he leered.

Gone, the room became a dead place without the vividity of his presence.

Cora still stood gazing blankly from the window, and Frank was apparently rooted to the spot, speechless.

After a moment he licked dry lips and spoke:

"Cora, Cora, can't you even speak to me? I begged them to let me come, for I knew you'd get some garbled tale of the killing, and though I was sure you would not believe it I——"

She whirled on him.

"Believe you had anything to do with it? And why not? Where were you that night—that night when I had dared you to go there! She was always hanging after you and poor Bill, and now it's you or Bill—yes, and me, too, for Corrigan is after blood, right or wrong!"

She began to wring her hands.

"And it *will* be the chair for Bill, for he threatened her so often, because she was so crazy about you. And he's all I have."

"All you have? How about me, Cora? Ain't been true to——"

"True?"

Her voice rose to a rasping scream.

"True? Don't come here and tell me that! I know how true—I know—Oh, God!" She broke down into weak crying—the crying of a heart-broken child. It seemed the sobs would tear the slender frame to bits as she leaned against the window frame, her face buried in the curtains.

Frank remembered a time when as a boy his little sister had cried so over the death of a pet dog. He could see yet the writhing form of the child as grief was succeeded by horrible convulsions, and he heard even now the terror of his mother's voice as she demanded who had hurt her darling.

Now Cora was suffering—and he to blame. And she would suffer more if he did not speak.

Awkwardly he advanced to the sobbing girl. The handcuffs bothered him, but he must manage somehow.

"Cora!"

He spoke low, and as gently as ever he had in the days when Cora had first been his "jane."

"Cora, listen! Don't cry so. Listen now. Maybe I did go to Westerman's a bit too much; but you were letting that ivory-topped Louis Michaels stick around here, and I got it straight that you were fixing to give me the go-by—Bill told me so. Bill was there at Westerman's that night of the killing, but——"

"But what?"

Cora's sobs had stopped, and she peered at Frank's face in an agony of waiting.

"Why do you want to know so bad what really happened?"

Frank bit off the words—his face grown white.

"Why is it so much to you *what* happened that night? Would you care if I went to the chair? Not much, my girl! I've got your number—I've had it—think I'll give up my freedom and my life—for the like of you—why you care as much for me as——"

"No, no, Frank—it's not that—not that at all. I do love you—but I was mad with jealousy of the Westerman girl—I could have—could have—. But they say Bill killed her, and he's only a kid, Frank. He's all I've got—your own folks are different, Frank. I can't see him die for what he didn't do. He didn't—didn't. Can't you—for me—Frank——"

She was whispering now—for Corrigan, she well knew, was not asleep.

"Frank, remember, remember those first days we had together? Up in the Bronx, in the little house? You used to say that forever and ever—no matter what happened—you'd love me. Through heaven or hell, you said—we had our heaven—didn't we, Frank—*dear?*"

Her arms were about his neck now, and her tear-stained cheek lay just where he could touch it with his lips if he bent his head ever so little.

The pleading eyes that had once meant the light of the world to him now sought to look into his own evading ones.

"Frank! Don't you remember?"

The lips that had not always been so white and drawn reached up seeking comfort.

Blindly he bent down, found the praying mouth, and for a moment or two time rolled back, and it was a summer day with nothing on earth to do but dance while Love piped.

Then he straightened. He threw off the years of mildewing underworld association, and became a man. He spoke aloud, and clearly:

"A'right, then, Cora! It's good-by, my girl!"

She fell back, white and shaking, but he frowned and shook his head, and went on:

"A'right! We're quits! Sure I did the Westerman girl. I stayed after Bill went. Fact is, I kicked him out, and she was so damned cry-baby about it that we had some words—and you know my temper, Cora. I shoved a gun at her—was one around there—and first I knew she had it right in the heart. And I beat it. Never noticed it was Bill's gun. Tough luck, a flattie had to lamp me as I was strolling out the door. 'Sall there is to it. Wish I had a smoke."

Corrigan stood grinning in the door. He glanced at Cora's rigid form—like a statue of horror she was.

"Can you beat the dames?" he muttered. "She's got what she wanted and acts like it was her getting sent up."

Corrigan started to call his men to take their prisoner back to jail, when with a scream of madness Cora flung herself on Frank.

"You didn't do it! Say you didn't! It means the chair—to end like this! My God! My God!"

Whimpering and clawing at the prisoner, Cora ceased to be a woman, and was only an animal clinging to all she loved on earth.

"Frank, Frank, it must have been Bill—it was, I saw him leave after you—I was watching from across the street. I could not bear for you to be in there with her so long—and while I waited for you to get out of sight, he slipped out of the front door like a thief—or—or a *murderer*."

Cora whispered the last word, and cowered over Frank's arm to which she hung with a grip of death.

Corrigan tried to loosen the vise-like fingers; he spoke gently to her, but in vain. Then he lost his temper and said:

"Here, what's the game anyway? If Frank croaked the girl, or Bill did, we gotta get out of here, and stop this flying through the air. I gotta get back and see if they've found Bill. Maybe he will have a little confession in his pocket, too. This is a popular case!"

The whir of the telephone interrupted Corrigan's sarcasm. He went into the hall to answer it, and did not notice the wizened face of the little old woman peering around the portieres that served as door to the dining-room.

Corrigan seemed put out at the telephone message.

"The deuce you say! What do you know about that, now? Well, I'll be—— I'll tell the world another case like this would drive me batty for fair. And so that's straight, eh? Oh, signed by a priest as witness, and all? Well, I'll bring Frank along back——. Sure is O. K. then. Yes, I'll fix that. Sure. Oh, yeh, sure. I'll be right back, chief. G'by."

As he stepped back to the living room with a perplexed frown creasing his brow, the same little old woman laid a hand on his arm.

"Oh, you're Cora's maid, eh? Well, what now?"

"If you please, I just want to see you a minute—out back——" The old lips were shaking, and the fated blue eyes were wide with something that puzzled Corrigan. He had seen that look in the eyes of men who were about to pay the supreme penalty for crime..

"Well, be quick about what you say—and say it here—I got this man to watch—and this woman, too. *I'll* get a stretch up the river myself if any more bobbles are pulled in this case."

The old woman seemed not to hear him.

She picked at her quivering lips with one knotty hand, while she held on to Corrigan's sleeve with the other, as if clinging to any support in dire peril.

"I'm just tellin' you—let Cora go—she never done it; nor Frank, nor Bill. Not Billy, my baby. I was scared to tell. I thought they'd never put it on Cora, and Bill said they couldn't hold him—and Frank is so smart—I thought he'd get off. But now you're holding Cora—and—you don't mean to let Bill go, either—*I* can tell! They'll all get long stretches, and Cora—it's not right for a girl to go to prison. Me, it don't matter, but Cora—and Bill—they shan't go. It was for them I did it, anyway. I followed Cora that night, when she went after Frank. I know she oughtn't to have carried on like she done with Frank—but she was always spoiled—and Frank's legal wife was in the asylum—and they were young and in love. After he began running with the Westerman girl Cora was like crazy. She never cared for anything on earth but Frank, and I put up with her rages, and stuck by her, because she needed me, and the people who come here thought I was only her maid because I wouldn't take even enough of *that* kind of money to dress decent.

"And then Bill got to running after the Westerman girl, and wild as Bill was, that finished him, for she was *bad*. But I'm tellin' you——"

The weary old voice was stronger now, and the bent shoulders were erect. Cora was at her side and was trying to silence her, but the older woman threw her back and resolutely kept on:

"That night when Cora followed Frank I slipped out after her, and watched from across the street. I saw Frank come out of the Westerman house, and almost right away Bill. Cora went after Frank and I was ready to go, too, when Bill came back and went in. I hurried over, and finding the door not quite closed, I slipped into the hall. They were in the little room old man Westerman used for an office, right off the hall, and I heard every word. The girl was tempting Bill—offering him money if he'd go into some swindling scheme that she was too nice to soil her hands with—and she was planning how, that done, they'd make a get-away with the loot. And she was bad—bad. I couldn't stand it, and I stepped into the room and told her what she was—plenty. And she went wild with anger—and—and called me things—and struck at me—like a street woman. So I shot her. I had the gun with me—Cora's. And Bill made me swear I'd not tell—he said it would be all right—but it's not. You can see here where the woman struck and choked me." She pulled aside the scarf she had wound about her neck.

"Maybe I wouldn't have killed her, but Bill had snatched up a knife from the table when she struck me—and I knew he would do for her if I did not. I'm old—it don't matter a few years less for me."

The old head drooped now. The fire of sacrifice was burned out.

Cora had pulled the old woman into a chair, and was sobbing on her shoulder.

The tears were running down Frank's face, and Corrigan blew his nose several times while swearing a steady stream.

Finally he said: "Me, I'm off the force for life! This sure has got me for a finish! Not ten minutes ago they telephoned me from headquarters that they got Bill over on Tenth Avenue

some place, got him while he was havin' a little stickin' party with a buncha wops, and Bill got his—and passed out. And before he does, he does a little confessing, too; says *he* shot the Westerman girl to save his mother's life—and as his dope is signed and witnessed—good-night!"

The worried Corrigan mopped his brow and thought a bit. Then he went to confer with the men outside.

Cora turned to Frank with not a word to say, but a universe of pleading in his eyes.

He did not speak either, and slowly the invisible chains which bound them tightened and drew them together.

"Well, Cora, girl."

His eyes were very tired, and he spoke like a man who has run a long way for a treasure and found nothing at his goal.

Cora did not speak for a bit, and then she said:

"You'll be out by night—can't we start over—go away—far away?"

He motioned with his head toward her mother—huddled in a chair, the picture of despairing, lonely sorrow.

"I forgot!" Cora had been forgetting so many years.

"Yes, Cora, you forgot her, just as you forgot some other things—and I did, too. Trouble with us has been, we've been chasing rainbows—for the pretties at the end. And now we've found there ain't no such thing. All is, now, we got to make the best of it, and not look any more for the Pollyannas in the sky. When she's clear—they'll soon free her—we'll all get out—somewhere."

Cora felt a chill as of winter come over her, but she tried to throw it off, and clung to Frank in a long kiss as Corrigan entered with the plain-clothes men.

"Well, well," he said cheerfully. "Break away for a bit. Frank will have to go along with me for his walking papers—he'll be right back. And as for this lady——"

He paused before the old woman's chair. She still sat hunched in woe.

"I'd give all I've got salted away to have had her keep her mouth shut. But it's done now—she'll not get a sentence, even. But I'll have to take her, I suppose."

He gently touched the old arm; looked suddenly at the half-hidden face; turned up to the light the eyes set in eternal peace.

"No, I won't have to take her. She's gone on ahead to the Judge."

HOW JAPANESE DWARF TREES ARE RAISED

THE little Japanese trees exhibited in the windows of the better grade Japanese novelty shops never fail to excite interest, because they are so unusual. In fact, in Japanese horticulture the art of landscape gardening on a miniature scale plays an important, if not a leading rôle. A village or a single home, surrounded by beautiful country, will be formed within a plot of ground a few yards square by the Japanese artisans. A river with its bridges, a lake with tiny ships on its silvery surface, roads, gardens, fields—all these features are to be found in the more pretentious Japanese miniature works. Hence it is not surprising to learn that the Japanese, in order to carry out their miniature landscape gardening with the utmost realism and fidelity, have had to raise dwarf trees for this purpose.

So the custom of dwarf trees has become an established one in Japan, some of these trees attaining the age of 200 years. The whole system of culture of these tiny trees may be summed up as the reversal of nature's method. It really consists not in the survival of the fittest, but rather in the survival of the unfittest, so to speak.

A poor, weak seed is usually chosen and planted. As soon as it has attained some growth, the leading shoot is trimmed off. The little plant then grows two other shoots, and these are carefully watched. When one shoot exhibits a strength that is vitally greater than its fellow, it is at once cut off and the weaker shoot left untouched in order to form the future dwarf tree's main stem or trunk. This system of trimming and cutting is followed punctiliously. Water is seldom used—only in such small quantities as to keep the little plant actually alive. The tree is kept in a pot too small for its full development and the roots are constantly pruned. The shoots are carefully trained and bent to follow the growth of a large tree.

All of which, it goes without saying, requires great patience; but this is a commodity with which the sons of Nippon are endowed to a degree approached by few of the Circasian races, and the Japanese horticulturist never tires of watching the growth of his tiny trees. When such a tree has been growing for about five years, it can be left to take care of itself, since it has become accustomed through its training to follow the rigid course laid out for it, and can then be trusted not to strike out again in the pursuit of its natural size and vigor. In this manner magnificent specimens of dwarf trees are produced which compare favorably with anything found among their big brothers in the untrained forests of Japan.

A Skillful Job

By DAN FOX

"WELL, Fox, thanks to you, I've got my man safely caged. But for your assistance I'm afraid I'd have had a nasty time of it if I hadn't been compelled to go back empty-handed."

The speaker was Joe Bloodgood, an English detective, who had come to New York in search of a noted criminal. Dan Fox, a private detective, had joined in with him, and by his assistance, as he acknowledged by his words, the fugitive had been taken into custody.

He was then under lock and key, and Joe was waiting to get extradition papers. And while waiting he was Dan's guest.

It was in the dead of winter.

They sat before a glowing fire, each with a good cigar between his teeth; between them a small table, and on it a bowl of punch, which Joe had brewed in regular English style.

"You give me too much credit, Joe, for my part in the affair," answered the American detective.

"Not a bit of it; but—to enjoy this punch, Fox, it needs just such a night as this"—suddenly switching from one subject to the other—"when the wind is howling outside, and you've got the curtains drawn, and are toasting your shins before a fire. Hand me the poker, will you, Fox?"

Dan passed the poker over, and Joe thrust it into the fire.

While it was heating, neither said a word.

When it was red-hot, Joe withdrew it, and plunged it into the punch.

"That's the finishing touch," he remarked. "There, just try a drop of that now—not too hot, nor too cold—isn't it gorgeous?"

Dan admitted that it was.

And then, as they sipped it, they began to talk of professional matters, and began comparing crimes and criminals of England and America.

"We have more crime in high life than you do in this country," said Joe finally.

"Why so?" inquired Fox.

"Well, our laws of inheritance are at the bottom of it. By our laws you know the eldest son is nearly always the sole heir; or, failing that, the nearest male relation, in most cases. Supposing that the life of only one being stands between you and a big estate and lots of money, and you are a poor devil, often going hungry—don't you see how great a temptation there is?"

"Yes," Dan assented. "Did you ever get mixed up in such an affair?"

"Several of them. But there was that case of Durand Manor—that was the tough case. But I got to the bottom of it, and it was what I call a skilful job."

"Let's hear about it. Do you mind relating the story?"

"Not at all. Let me see," bending his head reflectively. "Well, I suppose it will make a clearer story by beginning at the beginning," and we give the story as nearly in his words as we can recall them.

JOE'S STORY

Durand Manor, a very old and valuable estate, had descended through many generations. It was entailed in the direct line, the eldest son becoming the heir. Old Sir Lemuel, at his death, left behind him two sons—Robert, the heir, and James; the former twenty-two, the latter twenty years of age. Now, as is apparent, in the case of Robert's death without leaving a son, James succeeded his brother.

Having premised to this extent, I will now return to a day in early spring, as I sat in the office at our headquarters in Bow street. It chanced that I was alone. The door softly opened, and on turning to see who it was, I beheld the figure of a deeply veiled, exquisitely shaped woman.

I arose and offered her a chair. She accepted it with a weary air and a low-toned "Thank you." Then: "Are you a detective?" she finally asked, in the sweetest and saddest tone I ever heard.

"I am; can I do anything for you?"

She looked closely at me for a full minute, and then slowly said:

"Can I trust you?"

"You can rely upon my honesty and sense of honor," I replied.

"And will it be necesary that every one here should know it?" she hesitatingly asked.

"Not if you will meet me elsewhere and tell me privately what you have to say."

"Where can I meet you?"

"Anywhere you say."

"My car is outside," struck by a sudden inspiration. "I can talk to you while driving."

"The very thing. Return to your automobile, and I will be down in a few minutes."

What was my surprise, when I reached the sidewalk, to find myself confronted by a machine bearing a crest. The lady evidently was a person of rank. I hesitated about entering the car, but she motioned me imperatively to do so. For some little time we rode in silence.

"Are you a married man?" she finally abruptly asked.

"I am."

"And love your wife?"

"I do."

"Singular questions, you may think," she said, "but I ask them because I am called upon now

to bare the secret of my own heart to you. I am Lady Templeton."

I bowed low.

"Robert Durand and I had been friends for years," she resumed. "At last we were more—we were lovers. The knowledge was kept from my family, for they had in view my marriage with another. A month ago Robert Durand and I met; he was to return again two days later, but he did not come. Instead, I heard that he had suddenly become insane—but I do not believe it."

"Ah! And what am I to do in the matter, Lady Templeton?"

"Find means to prove that he is not," she promptly returned.

"That will be hard to do," I replied. "I have heard of his insanity, and you must be aware that several of the best physicians in England have examined him and pronounced him crazy."

"I know it," she said calmly. "But they were deceived."

I was puzzled to know what to say. At last an inspiration moved me to ask:

"Do you suspect anybody? In other words, do you think his brother James is at the bottom of it?"

"I do," she firmly said. "He alone, beside Robert and I, knew of our love. Robert told him against my wishes. James is ambitious."

Such things had been heard of—a younger brother getting an elder out of the way. But the Durand name was too proud and spotless a one to carelessly traduce.

"I tell you that Robert is the victim of a conspiracy," she finally said. "Will you try to get to the bottom of it?"

Perhaps her absolute faith in the truth of what she said impressed me. And before I knew fairly what I was about I had committed myself, and had agreed to attempt to prove—in the face of half a dozen eminent physicians—that Robert Durand was not insane.

Lady Templeton placed a generous sum of money in my hand.

"When this is gone a note addressed to me will insure your receiving as much more," she said. "Leave me at the next corner; and, above all, remember that you have in your keeping the secret of a woman's heart. Be true to your trust!"

"I will, I swear it," I solemnly said.

Well, half an hour afterward I was calling myself a fool, a donkey, a blockhead, and a score of other equally uncomplimentary names, for in addition to feeling that I had set about a useless task, I did not know but I might get my head within the lion's jaws and have it snapped off.

However, I had given my word to investigate the case, and that promise I must keep.

I left London and went down to Durand Manor. In view of the fact that Robert was pronounced hopelessly insane, making it sure that James would succeed to the estate, the father of Lucy Darrel had withdrawn all objection, and the night that I reached the Manor James and Lucy were married.

I had stolen into the grounds and hidden among some shrubbery. I gazed in upon the scene of festivity. In the midst of it a wild and fearful shriek arose above all other sounds.

It was uttered by the mad brother, confined in an unused wing of the building. Its intonation killed any doubt I might have had concerning Robert's insanity.

"I might as well go home," I thought. "I'm sorry for Lady Templeton, but she is mistaken—her lover is mad as a March hare."

Then a car rolled up to the door. In a few minutes the bridal couple would leave on their way to the train and their tour.

I was about to move out of the shrubbery, and return to the inn at the village, when I was caused to pause by the rear approach of two men.

"Treat him kindly. Poor Bob! Use no harsh measures with him."

It was James Durand, the wicked man Lady Templeton suspected of being, and speaking so kindly of his unfortunate brother? It was a sin and a shame to even dream that such a thing were possible!

"I'll treat him kindly, sir, never fear," was the reply.

This was the attendant who had charge of the insane man.

"That's right. Poor Bob, indeed! I hope he may not die while I am absent."

"No telling, sir; he's apt to go off in one of his violent fits at any minute," was the reply. "You'll be home in two months?"

"Yes."

"I shouldn't be at all surprised if he went off in just a month from now."

James Durand sighed.

"Well, if he's got to die, I suppose it might as well be while I am absent," and then they passed out of hearing.

Ten minutes later the automobile rolled swiftly away, and I returned toward the village in a brown study. The conversation I had heard did not exactly please me. I determined to get a glimpse of the attendant by daylight.

I did so the next day, and his appearance impressed me any way but favorably. I managed to obtain the information that his name was Thomson, that he was a professional attendant for the insane, and had been attached to some insane asylum near Liverpool.

Back to London I went, and my opinion of Thomson was not improved when I discovered the particular insane asylum to which he had been attached. It was a private institution, and it had long borne a bad name.

Once more I went to Durand Manor.

"That's a cousin of the Durands," said the landlord, as a young lady drove past in a basket-phaeton. "She's playing lady up at the manor-house until the heir comes back with his bride."

I wondered if she could be in the same house and not suspect the truth, if Robert Durand was not really crazy? She certainly would not assist in a crime.

In the afternoon, after dinner, I strolled away toward the manor-house, as all the villagers called it. "The outside grounds," as they were called, everybody was permitted to visit, strangers being supposed, however, not to pass the huge stone portals of the gates a short distance from the house.

I had nearly reached the gates, when I heard the rapid fall of a horse's hoofs approaching from behind me. Glancing back, I saw a lady on horseback, dressed in a long riding-habit and high hat.

"Do you belong here?" she demanded, as she reined in her horse on reaching my side.

"I do not."

"Well, no matter. Here, hold my horse. I will alight just within the gates."

Amused at her peremptory tone, yet nothing loath, I assisted her to dismount, and then took hold of the horse's bridle.

"Ah!"

This exclamation, suppressed but meaning, fell from her lips.

I glanced quickly around, and saw the young lady whom the landlord had said was Durand's cousin.

The equestrienne eyed this beautiful girl coming slowly along the path with dainty step, her uncovered head bent, her eyes fixed on the ground as if they searched for wild flowers.

A look of something like jealousy shot into the equestrienne's dark eyes. One moment she seemed to hesitate, and then she swiftly advanced toward the lady of the manor, demanding:

"Who are you?"

Standing by the horse's head, I could hear the question asked, in freezing tones, a question which came so suddenly that the lady of the manor started in alarm.

"Who are you?" repeated the equestrienne, in chilling tones, fastening her glowing eyes on the other.

"Excuse me, but who are you who enter these grounds in this manner?" having recovered her self-possession.

"No matter who I am," was the brusque reply. "Are you anything to James Durand?"

"I am!" haughtily.

"What?" hissed the equestrienne, clutching her fiercely by the hand.

"I am his cousin."

"Ah!" This time it was in a tone of relief. "Where is James Durand?"

"He is absent on his wedding tour," was the reply.

"What! James Durand married! When was it?"

"Two days ago."

The equestrienne reeled and almost fell. But she recovered herself, and with steady step returned to where I stood, and I assisted her into the saddle. Her teeth were clenched, her eyes flamed, and as she rode away I heard her mutter:

"When he did not come I knew there was another woman in the case. So he has deserted me! I know his plans, and will be revenged!"

Revenged! She knew his plans! Then there was something crooked about James Durand. I sprang after her, called to her, but she put whip to her horse and I was soon distanced.

Instantly my mind was made up. I would follow up this woman, and extort from her what she knew.

I traced her to London, and there lost track of her.

A month had passed, all but one day. In this time I had become convinced that James Durand was crooked—that he had paid Thomson to become his brother's executioner. And the morrow was the day on which Thomson had said, in my hearing, that Robert would probably die. Probably? In my present mind, I considered it as a certainty. But what could I do? With no more grounds than I now had, I could not get a warrant and force an entrance to the manor.

Gloomy-minded and despondent, I wandered through Hyde Park, and suddenly came face to face with the woman I had searched for in vain. Where skill had failed, accident had befriended me. I spoke to her. At first she seemed inclined to resent it as a familiarity, but I uttered the name of James Durand, and found it talismanic.

"Yes, it is true!" she said, with her eyes flashing. "Sit down here, where we cannot be overheard. Listen! I was an actress, but pure in life as a babe. James Durand saw me—loved me—he said, and heaven knows I loved him. There is no need of telling you the story—it is sufficient that I loved him so blindly that I let him make a fool of me. He told me that were he the heir he would marry me. The chance remark brought forth in my mind the birth of a devil.

" 'Give your brother drugs—make him mad,' I told James. Robert Durand was drugged—made mad. He was examined while under the influence of these drugs, and the doctors said he was insane.

"No sooner does James Durand come into possession, or know that he is sure of succeeding, than he deserts me. With my kisses warm on his lips he plighted his troth with another woman, and the hour that I learned it my heart was filled with wormwood and gall. The love I bore him is now changed into deadly hate; I have sworn to be revenged. He will cause Robert's death, I know, and then—then—I will put the halter around his neck."

But it was not my purpose to let Robert Durand be murdered.

To a passing "bobby" I gave a glimpse of my shield. He advanced, and we conveyed the woman to the lock-up. She repeated her story to a magistrate, and armed with a warrant I went to the manor-house.

I arrested Thomson and released Robert Durand. To all appearances he was mad, but when the effects of the drugs had passed off he was as sane as either of us.

We intercepted a letter from James Durand to Thomson, containing the following: "Is he dead yet? If not, it would be as well if he died at an early date."

I laid my plans to capture James Durand when he stepped foot in England. To avoid a scandal and a blemish on the name, his brother must have written to him, exposing the failure of his dastardly scheme, for James Durand took a vessel at Havre and came to America, and was killed afterward, I have heard, in the great world war.

Robert Durand hushed the matter up, and Thomson got off scot free, so far as that job was concerned, but I dug into his history and got hold of some facts which sent him to prison for a long term.

The actress hid herself when she heard that her destroyer had escaped.

As for Robert and Lady Templeton, they were finally married. That I was handsomely paid you can well imagine.

MOCCASIN-MAKING MAY SOON BE A LOST ART

BECAUSE of a scarcity of proper leather from which to manufacture footwear, and the availability of store shoes, Indian moccasin making will soon be a lost art.

Throughout the Northwest the fringe-bordered and bead-bedecked Indian moccasin is rapidly being substituted by the white man's shoe. The high-laced shoe is a favorite with both sexes. For hunting and fishing the 1921 "warrior" prefers a hob-nailed knee-length logger's boot.

The aboriginal moccasin fabric was moose hide for cold weather in the Northwest; buffalo hide with the hair on for winter on the plains; buckskin for all general purposes, and later on beef hide in place of the disappearing skins.

In one fabric or the other were distinct tribal models with historical events drawn in beads. The squaws were the recorders of history by their moccasin bead work. The Crow, Sioux and Blackfoot Indian shoes possessed a hard rawhide sole to ward off stubby grass and pebbles.

In the snowy regions of the Northwest the moccasin had soft soles that would admit of the use of the snowshoe.

Tourists who have been searching for various makes of moccasins declare some of the Northwest tribes have entirely eliminated moccasins. That the historical shoe of the American native maynot become extinct, the University of Washington will attempt to collect specimens of moccasins as made by every aboriginal tribe on the North American continent. An expedition will leave very soon to begin the collecting of the footwear.

GHOSTLY LIGHT SHINES IN CHURCH BELL TOWER

ST. JOSEPH'S Roman Catholic parish in Jersey City is experiencing considerable nerve strain just now from a weird and uncanny illumination of the belfry of the church, which is situated at Baldwin and Pavonia avenues. Nightly the ghostly light appears in the belfry, but while persons in the street can see it plainly those who climb to the belfry to investigate find nothing but the uncommunicative pall of night.

The whole parish is trying to solve the mystery. Priests and policemen have thoroughly searched the belfry for several nights and experts in will o' the wisps and other similar spectral illuminations have been consulted. Sailors have advanced the theory that St. Elino's light, which sometimes appears at sea and which is traceable to atmospheric conditions, may be taking shore leave. It would be characteristic of this light to attach itself to a slender projected structure like a tower because when seen at sea it is usually hovering over a masthead or spar.

The light first appeared some weeks ago. Persons who saw its flitting uncertain gleam thought that disorderly characters might have climbed to the tower and notified the Oakland avenue police station. Two policemen who ascended a ninety-foot ladder found nothing although the crowd in the street saw the light all the time.

Priests sprinkled flour at the church doors and before the entrance to the bell tower on the next night to obtain footprints, but although the light appeared as before and danced mysteriously to and fro in the tower there were no marks on the floor in the morning.

Electricians from the Public Service Corporation were called in recently. They shut off the current for three blocks around St. Joseph's thinking that the tower light might be due to some electrical disturbance, but the tower light did not disappear. In fact, it seemed even more persistent in the darkness. Fathers Canty and Owen of St. Joseph's, accompanied by several policemen, climbed to the tower again, but found nothing to explain the strange illumination.

The Beggar's Silk Sock

By WILLIS F. LATHROP

WITH slow deliberation two policemen put their shoulders to the front door and braced their powerful bodies against it. They were two uniformed patrolmen, and they had been picked, not for speed, but for heavy duty. For this purpose they were indeed wisely chosen.

On the veranda of his home Attorney Alan Roxley watched them with the paramount impatience of a lover waiting to reach his imprisoned fiancée. Captain Oldham, selected for his service not so much for the bulk of his stature as for the no less roomy size of his brain, issued directions and occasionally peered in at a window.

"Now, heave hard!" cried the captain.

The door gave way and all four rushed in. In the front room, a parlor such as only an income like Alan Roxley's could furnish, they beheld his wife, bound by ropes to one of the mahogany rockers. A heavy cloth covered her eyes; another was bound tightly across her mouth.

Without waiting for the police Mr. Roxley set to work to release his wife from her bonds. He did not realize that it was an incongruous thing for an attorney at civil law to be engaged in.

"Genie, are you hurt?" he questioned anxiously.

She shook her head in reply, slowly and uncertainly, but as he persisted, "Sure you're all right?" she became more positive.

Mrs. Roxley's first utterance was a gasp, followed by gulps. Then she stared about her, rose stiffly and painfully, for a very young lady; but feeling faint, she allowed herself to sink back into her chair.

Captain Oldham, observing that she could not yet be expected to talk, turned to her husband to learn what he knew of the affair.

"The first I knew of it," he reported, "was when, coming home from the office, I found the front door locked, a thing that I had never before encountered. I failed to arouse my wife by knocking or ringing, so I tried the other doors. All were locked. Then I looked in from the front window and saw my wife just as you found her."

"You are Mr. Roxley, the civil attorney, I believe?" inquired the captain, and receiving a nod, added, "I thought I had seen or heard of you before. Do you wish us to look into this matter for you or——"

"Most assuredly, captain. There is nothing in the affairs of my family we could wish to keep private, particularly at a time such as this. Indeed, I feel scarcely capable of handling a matter of this sort without your aid." Roxley turned to his wife and said: "Virginia, you may tell us what has happened."

Mrs. Roxley had quite recovered her faculties and her normal composure. She looked about to see who was to be included in her audience, and commenced:

"I have been buying a group of statuettes for the house, and this morning, about ten, I went into town to buy a third, a figure of Psyche. I bought them all at an antique shop. The dealer seems very anxious to please me and puts himself at some pains to show me everything he has. He had only one statuette of Psyche, and at first he told me it was not on sale, but I offered him an extra price for it and he let me have it.

"I took dinner in town, as I often do. Then I came home and set up the statuette. Not more than an hour later, while I sat here reading, two men came upon me, so silently that I never heard a sound, and one of them blindfolded me and forced the gag into my mouth before I could see either of them or utter a sound. It was all done so quickly that I scarcely realized what was happening to me."

"If you did not see them, Mrs. Roxley, interrupted the captain, "how do you know there were two of them, or that there might not have been a third or a fourth?"

"I am sure that there were two of them, although they never once said a word to each other, even in a whisper. Also, I am sure that only one of them came near to me, or touched me. I made trouble for this one. I struggled to free myself, and once I got the gag free and tried to scream, but he clapped his hand over my mouth, and then in a queer, rasping whisper, he threatened to kill me if I screamed, and said he wouldn't hurt me if I kept still. I had no idea what they wanted, and I was not very much reassured by this sort of assurance of safety. Could I have spoken I should have asked him a thousand questions of what their purpose was in thus making me a prisoner. One never craves the use of one's tongue so much as when one is deprived of it. I continued to struggle, but it was no use, for he would not let me get my hands anywhere near my head. As I writhed around, I could look down at the floor under my blindfold, and he stood so close to me that I could even see the cuffs of his trousers. They were ragged and filthy with dirt. I could also feel that his coat was in the same condition. Once I caught my finger in a hole in one arm and ripped it—frightfully, I suppose. I began to suspect why they wanted me blindfolded—that they were looking for some respectable clothing. But what puzzled me was that I could see beneath his trouser legs a pair of perfectly good silk socks—I mean—well, they were brown, and clean, and looked like new. His shoes were so muddy I couldn't see whether they

were worn or not, but I know that his socks were quite respectable, for a tramp to wear."

"But what of the other man?" said the captain, who had eyed the young wife closely during her narrative.

"Yes, what of him?" prompted her husband.

"The other man, I think, wore rubber heels and soles, or else had overshoes on, for I thought I heard their soft thud occasionally when he was on the hard-wood floor. I can't be sure of anything, not even that, for I never saw him. But what, oh what, can it mean? What have they done? I thought I heard pounding in the house, and then everything was as quiet—I never had anything like that happen to me before."

"Whatever they came for, it must have been desperately wanted, for a daylight burglary of this sort," observed Captain Oldham.

"Suppose we get the household inventory and see what is missing," proposed Mr. Roxley, anxiously, and he went to the library, which he had always used as his study. At the door he came to a halt and stared in amazement at what he saw. Lying upon the floor were the wrecks of the decapitated statuettes with which his thoughtful young wife had sought to adorn his favorite evening refuge.

"Hallo! Genie!" he cried, excitedly. "All the statuettes are smashed. What does this mean?"

"Iconoclasts!" sighed his wife resignedly, as she sank limply back into her chair.

An inventory of the property was made by Mr. Roxley and the captain. A comparison of it with the former inventories differed only in the absence of a set of tableware and several pieces of jewelry, which Mr. Roxley explained had since been placed in a safety deposit box in a bank vault.

Captain Oldham looked perplexed. He wore one of those sage yet puzzled frowns that a police captain assumes when he commences an attempt to live up to the reputation for which he was hired—the reputation of using his brains. "Iconoclasts," said he, as though he were weighing the word on a pair of scales, to see if it compared with some opposing thought that had occurred to the organ which earned his living. "There have been no reports of their activities anywhere in the State for the past ten years. This seems to be an original outbreak, if it is such, and to say the least, it is an unique case. I know of none parallel to it. True, the work of these religious law breakers is as frequently done during the day as after dark, but I never heard of an iconoclast appearing in beggar's clothes, blind-folding a victim, and displaying brown silk socks in contrast to his costume. In fact, Mr. Roxley, I very strongly suspect that they were on some more important errand than mere image breaking. And yet, what? They did not appear to be searching for anything, for everything about the house, as you say, is in proper order. Well, Mr. Roxley, what do you wish to do about it?"

"Captain, I am as much in the dark as you. What would you do about it? If I prefer a charge against these fellows, can the warrant be served? In other words, with whatever description my wife can furnish of them, can we hope to bring these men to justice? As you know, I have nothing to do with any but civil and equity cases, and know nothing of the ways of criminal procedure."

Captain Oldham wagged his head dubiously. "I don't like the responsibility of advising you, Mr. Roxley, and I see you don't want the responsibility of deciding for yourself. Well, I must admit that clues are rather scarce—a pair of silk socks, a beggar's dirty clothes, and a pair of rubber heels and soles. You need something more than that to identify and convict two men. The case is rather odd when you take all its features into consideration. Furthermore, your loss seems to be small, for you can have those figurines repaired so no one would ever know that they had been beheaded. I'm afraid that in the hands of the police, well trained as we are, this case would scarcely be worth while."

Mr. Roxley still seemed undecided, and said nothing.

"Of course," continued the captain, after a long pause, during which he seemed to expect Mr. or Mrs. Roxley to speak, "if these fellows are going to continue breaking images, we may get a line on 'em, but candidly I don't think they will. The iconoclast who does that never works as he has here. These fellows seem to have had some special reason for wanting your wife blindfolded, and didn't care to have her hear their conversation—either used signs or agreed upon their procedure beforehand. Now, in order to do anything with a case, we usually compare it with former cases under the same class, and they often guide us to the right conclusion. But even then, we have to have a clue or so to pick up the trail, and most criminals leave plenty of them. But a case like this, with no basis for comparison, and no tangible clues—well, if a client insists on service, we usually turn the matter over to one of these fellows who call themselves—er—consulting experts. In this way we conveniently dispose of the case to one whose chief interest in life seems to be killing time by studying idle curiosities such as this. This man, occasionally, happens to run across the crook's track and, once in a while, secures justice, though as far as I can figure it his success can be due to nothing more than mere chance. He calls himself Arthur Kadinger."

"Kadinger! Assuredly, I have heard of him before. I thought the papers put a high estimate on his ability."

"Oh, of course, but it is usually the sensational successes of these fellows that are heard of. As for the——"

"How could one get hold of him?"

"Oh, of course, if you really care to try him, I'll get him for you, Mr. Roxley," and Captain Oldham stepped to the telephone.

Not more than an hour later the imposing figure of Arthur Kadinger stood in the doorway of the Roxley home, and he was welcomed by the attorney with an outstretched hand, which he took absently. He, like the captain, depended on his brains for his career, profession, and, to some extent, his livelihood and his brain was always active.

"Have a seat, Mr. Kadinger," urged the attorney, taking his guest's cap, and eyeing it curiously as he laid it on a stand. "The captain did not seem willing to yield the case to you, but I could not be satisfied with his report of the affair."

"I am sorry to say," remarked Kadinger, with a slow smile, "that Captain Oldham has his little weaknesses, and his pet fancies, like all his brothers. He has no faith in my methods and attributes what success I have to luck, and not to scientific analysis or logical thought. He is consequently kept busy marking me and branding me as a lucky individual. He is afraid I may some day be chosen head of the central detective bureau, and that he will consequently lose his position.

"From what little he gave me of the case, I am able to say that you were more than wise in consulting an expert analyst, and that Captain Oldham's investigation was ridiculously superficial, more so than the average police official would be satisfied with. As the captain has told you, he never before heard of this sort of a case, or anything like it. Now I fortunately have, not in real life, but in fiction, which is just as valuable, since it may be that the criminal has read the same thing. The captain has doubtless never enjoyed reading the Adventures of Sherlock Holmes. However, my knowledge of a fiction based on this subject of image breaking may have nothing to do with the case at hand. I now wish to hear of this affair in detail from your point of view, Mrs. Roxley, and also from yours, Mr. Roxley."

Mr. Kadinger listened in silence to their reports. Then he went to each of the statuettes in turn and examined their heads and also the bases. In each case the head had been broken from the body, but the figure was otherwise unharmed.

"An iconoclast," he observed, "is not satisfied with a mere severing of head from body. Granted an opportunity, he will smash the entire image until it is unrecognizable. Perhaps it would have been better for the man in this case if he had done so. It seems to me he has taken caution to guard against witnesses to some more important crime than that of breaking images, although he has overlooked this one important point. The image breaker feels no guilt, but rather a sense of duty toward his cause, or his religious sect.

"I perceive, Mrs. Roxley, that these three moulds have been bought at the same place, at different times. You bought them at Klinskey's curio shop on C Street."

"How did you know that?" demanded Mrs. Roxley.

The face of the investigator wore a gleam of triumphant pleasure. "Klinskey's price mark is on each base. There is also the stamp of the maker and the date of the work, and these days are far apart. Now, Klinskey's trade is too brisk for any one mould of a figure to remain in his place for many days. The same is true of the firm from whom he buys these articles. In fact, they are not always able to keep up with their orders. Since these dates are more than a year apart, you could scarcely have bought this figure of Lincoln, made over a year ago, within the last three days, nor this of Franklin, made in April of this year. I therefore infer that you bought them some time apart. This Psyche, then, is the one you bought to-day. I even regard it as odd that it was made as long as two months ago. Something very odd must have occurred to keep it from being sold for six weeks after its delivery to Klinskey. You might also believe from the nature of the break that it has been broken once before, and then repaired."

"Now, why didn't the policeman think of all that?" demanded Mrs. Rowley of her husband.

Mr. Roxley smiled, as he glanced at her. It was a smile of satisfaction.

"As I said," remarked Mr. Kadinger, "Captain Oldham has his little weak points. Now I t' ink I'll look outdoors for a bit. Mr. Roxley, I may need your services as a guide, though it is not likely, so you had better join me."

Mr. Roxley complied with alacrity for a lawyer, who was used to giving orders and advice instead of taking them. With a single glance, Kadinger took in the large front lawn, with all its flower bushes and trees, and indicating that his interest was not here, he led his client to the rear. He glanced at the adjoining houses and lawns, which were as elegant as the Roxley home. Even the back yards lacked the usual sordidness, the rickety woodsheds and board fences which were everywhere apparent in some residence districts he had visited. There were, instead, only tile-roofed garages with concrete drives.

As they came to the rear of the house he exclaimed: "Ah, this is what I had hoped for—a gravel walk. Concrete leaves no clues, but gravel——" He did not finish, but paced the walk, which led from the house past the garage to the alley. The alley, to his apparent disappointment, was paved.

"Well, at any rate," said he after a brief moment of thought, "the paved alley does not matter. The gravel has left the clue and that is all that is necessary. The man could not have left a plainer indication of his intentions in a written note than those small, round holes in the gravel. That is your clue, and it will lead me as surely to the man I want as though I had seen him myself, for in fact I think I have. I am leaving you now, Mr. Roxley. I'll report here in the morning."

Without further remarks, the consulting expert walked down the alley at a rapid gait and was gone.

For hours that night the attorney and his wife pored over the words that man had uttered. They went out to look at the gravel path, on which as plain as day was a set of footprints leading from the house, and on either side of these a small, round indentation. They tried conjecture after conjecture but not one would fit. When they retired it was with the conclusion that both the intruders had carried a cane.

"One of them carried his cane on his left side and the other on the right, and they went single file," deduced the attorney. "Now in the morning we'll see if we figured right. But what gets me is how he is going to follow them just from that."

Both were up bright and early, after a more or less sleepless night. They had barely completed a hasty breakfast when the dignified attorney bounded to the door in response to a ring.

Mr. Kadinger greeted them with an enigmatic expression playing on his face and a beam of pleasure in his fine eyes. "Well," he announced, "I have a man just as I promised."

"But what of the other?" demanded Mrs. Roxley.

"The other?"

"I told you there were two of them."

"Your pardon, madam. There was only one!"

"And I insist that there were two. What about those sounds I heard? What about the cane marks in the gravel?"

"The other man was a pair of crutches, with rubber tips."

Roxley gasped. His wife stared.

"But how can you be sure there were not two men?" she persisted.

"You admit they never spoke to each other?"

"Yes—yes, of course."

"Rubber heels and soles used together are not common. When I saw those crutch prints in the gravel, I felt sure it was the thud of rubber crutch tips on the floor you had heard instead of rubber bottomed shoes."

"By George, that seems possible!" exclaimed the attorney. "Now, how did you trail the man so easily?"

"As I told you, the man was known to me, Mr. Roxley. You of course observed that those crutch prints were not even with each other, but alternate, like human footprints. Now, the man I happened to know was a patient at St. Mary's hospital not more than a month ago. The first time I saw him there, I was called to hunt for a tiny tube containing ten thousand dollars worth of radium, which was lost. Well, I didn't find it then, but I have done so at last. I arrested this man who broke your statues on a charge of grand larceny—for stealing ten thousand dollars worth of radium."

"I see no connection," confessed the attorney.

"Nor I," put in his wife.

"Well, to make a short story long," smiled Kadinger, "when I went to the hospital, everyone was searching for the lost radium. At that time this man was the only one who was walking about on crutches, and I noted his peculiarity of carrying each crutch forward alternately as one does his feet, instead of swinging both together. While I was still there, this man paid his bill and left the hospital. Shortly after he went, a statue of Psyche disappeared from the hospital. Everyone was so excited over the loss of the radium tube, which was the size of a baby's little finger, that they never thought of the ten-dollar statuette of Psyche. I got interested in the latter, and the hospital staff decided my services were no longer of value to them. As a parting shot I advised them to look for the statuette and they might find the radium hidden in it. Do you know what gave me that idea?"

Both his clients shook their heads.

"I had more than once seen this cripple reading a book of Sherlock Holmes stories. I got hold of the book once and saw he had been reading "The Adventure of the Five Napoleons," in which a small object is concealed in a bust of Napoleon. I never knew what they did about my parting hint to them, but last night I went back to the hospital to ask for the name and address of the cripple. You see, I figured that he had come to the hospital without criminal intentions in his mind, so had given his correct name and address when they asked for it. Then he found the radium, became aware of its value from the excitement occasioned by its loss, and conceived his idea of hiding it in the hollow head of the statuette from the story he had been reading.

"I first went to Klinskey's place, where I learned that the young man had pawned the statue for a small sum for two weeks' time. Klinskey sometimes does this, giving the person who pawns an article to understand that it may be sold within a certain time. To-day you, Mrs. Roxley, were so bent on having this particular bit of plaster that Klinskey sold it, as he was anxious to please you, and thought the young man would be satisfied with a fair price for it. On the contrary, he was very angry when he came to claim his pawn, and ordered Klinskey to buy it back. Klinskey refused, so he tells me, but furnished him your address, saying that perhaps you would sell it to him. As he had no means, the cripple naturally took more desperate measures to get the statue which contained what he had not yet dared to dispose of within the city.

"After learning all that Klinskey had to tell, which merely confirmed my train of reasoning, I looked up the address furnished by St. Mary's and found the cripple still living there. He figured that he had done his work so thoroughly all the way through that he had no reason to suppose anyone could trace him, so had not taken the precaution to hide out, as the police express it, or change his identity in any way. He had the radium tube still on him, hidden in one of his silk socks, where one of his toes is missing. It was, in fact, amputated only a month ago."

Mr. Roxley nodded his understanding. "Now,

why did the fellow think it necessary to blindfold my wife?"

"Well, of course, you saw the effect on her. However, I don't fancy he foresaw that she would imagine the presence of two men, or see beneath her blindfold, but he did not care to have her see his face, nor the fact that he used crutches. He could, of course, have masked his face, but he could not have concealed his crutches, or the limp which would result from a failure to use them. As for the beggar's attire, it was probably donned before he came to the house and worn over a better suit, as a disguise against people outside the house. If I am not mistaken, he discarded it in the alley, for I found one there, with a bad tear in the sleeve and patched trousers and worn cuffs.

"Furthermore, we see why your statuette of Psyche was two months out of the mold—since it was the one recently bought by and stolen from the hospital. The cripple pawned it, of course, for fear he would be traced and it be found in his possession. When he came here, he did not have to smash all three statues, for he knew where the radium tube was hidden, but he figured that if he broke the others the police would misconstrue his motive as that of a religious fanatic or iconoclast."

SPOOK PHOTOGRAPHS INTEREST INQUIRERS

IN a sun-heated room in London, lit by a glaring glass dome, members of the Psychical Research Society recently inspected a series of spook photographs. They were pictures taken by flashlight of a woman medium who has the power—so it is claimed—of allowing "plasma" to be extruded from various parts of her body.

The manifestation took place in a dark room during a seance and under conditions arranged by the spirits. When the right moment comes signals are given by raps, the magnesium flares up and the devotees wait with excitement to see what the camera has caught.

The spirits had directed that the medium should be dressed in black with black stockings, so that the "plasma" should be seen in white contrast.

To the uninitiated the "plasma" looks like some white, soft material, sometimes like a viscous fluid, sometimes of wispy texture, sometimes piling itself up in columnar mass on the floor, but nearly always flowing from some part of the medium's body or from her feet.

The speech made by a member of the society and the answers to various questions did not make it clear why such importance should be attached to these photographs. No one knew what or why "plasma" was. It was said to be cold and rather repulsive to the touch, capable of leaving an impression on wet clay, and sometimes rather prickly.

Its shape seemed to vary according to the expectations of the circle. In some cases it would be columnar, in others it would take the shape of hands.

No one present asked why the camera should be affected by the expectation of the circle, and no one knew why the "plasma" sometimes suddenly returned to the body like a flash and at other times retreated slowly. But all the members said it was very interesting and "we must go on with our investigations."

70,000 WILD PONIES IN MONTANA

IT is estimated that there are 70,000 wild cayuses on the range in Montana eating forage and a general pest, according to Harry B. Mitchell of Great Falls, former member of the Montana Live Stock Commission.

"These horses are not 'wild' in the sense of being vicious or dangerous," says Mr. Mitchell. "They are merely roaming at large. Suggestion has been made that the State kill them, but authority is lacking. The Live Stock Commission has authority to take up vagrant horses and sell them, using the money to pay debts, but sale is impossible. No one will buy them at the present time.

"Dr. J. W. Butler, State Veterinarian, made a trip to Chicago during the war to see if the packing companies could not butcher the cayuses and export the meat to Belgium and France. The companies told him they could do it and give the people of those countries cheap meat, but that they would not dare to do so lest the report got around the United States that they were butchering and canning horse flesh and every beef eater become convinced that the packing plants were selling him horse meat.

"Dr. Butler has also urged that Montana establish an abattoir and kill the cayuses to manufacture them into fertilizer, but that plan has never been carried into effect.

"It is impossible to say how many of these wild horses there are in Montana. I have heard the number estimated as high as 100,000. Dr. Butler's figure is 70,000."

The "wild horse" against which the stock growers are directing a fight because of the forage they devour are the descendants of the Indian cayuses, scrubby little animals of 600 and 700 pounds. For years in the early days of the State they roamed at large and were occasionally gathered in and sold by the Indians for $2.50 to $7 each.

Demand for horses is now so slack that the cayuses command absolutely no price. They are increasing in number. The influx of settlers and fencing off of the open range have reduced the "wild horse" to the status of a costly pest.

The Clue

By HARRIET D. WILSON

ONE morning John Franklin, a wealthy citizen of Baltimore, received a letter informing him that his brother was dead and had bequeathed his fortune and his only daughter to his guardianship.

The news came to Mr. Franklin like a thunderbolt. His brother he had not even heard of, much less seen, for nearly twenty-five years before, when he had emigrated to South America.

As, however, he had left behind a fortune of nearly a million dollars, his brother at once wrote a reply to the administrators of the will accepting the trust reposed in him, and inviting his niece to take up her abode at his house.

A few weeks later the young lady arrived.

She was a tall, handsome girl of probably between seventeen and eighteen, but looking older.

She was attended by an old woman, a native of the place where she had been born, and who had been her nurse since infancy.

Nearly six months passed away.

The young lady had a very reserved manner about her, and made friends with no one.

She was icily polite, but no more, and even her guardian appeared to stand somewhat in awe of her imperious temper.

One condition of the will that must not be forgotten was, that in the event of the testator's daughter dying or marrying before the age of twenty-one, all the property was to revert to his brother.

The personal habits of Mr. Franklin were very luxurious.

Although married several years, he had no children, and occupied a suite of rooms upon the same floor as his niece.

The apartments of his wife were on the floor below.

One morning after his niece had been an inmate of his house for nearly a year, when his valet came to assist him to dress, a valuable diamond stud he had worn on the previous evening could not be found, and apparently much annoyed and agitated at his loss, Mr. Franklin had at last to go down to the breakfast-room without it.

Arrived there he found his wife already awaiting him, but his niece had not yet made her appearance.

The circumstance was singular, as the young lady was in the habit of rising early.

Inquiry also elicited the fact that neither had her attendant been seen, and with a vague unformed fear in their minds, Franklin and his wife proceeded to their niece's apartments.

They found the door locked and the loudest knocking could elicit no response.

Surprised and alarmed, they at once had the door broken in, when a ghastly spectacle met their eyes.

Upon the floor, robed only in her night-dress, lay the heiress, dead; while upon the bed in the adjoining room was found the old woman, stabbed.

The police were at once communicated with, and immediately took possession of the apartments.

Detectives were set upon the case, and in the course of a few hours the result of their investigations pointed but to one conclusion.

It was her uncle who was the assassin.

The case against him was so clear that there could hardly exist a doubt of his guilt.

In the first place there was the clause in the will which named him as the heir in case of his niece dying before the age of twenty-one.

From the evidence of one of the servants, it was proved that two or three days previously the murdered girl and he had had a violent quarrel.

She had accused him of appropriating some of the money given into his hands in trust to his own uses, and threatened that if he did not make the amount abstracted good before three days she would expose him.

The three days had expired on the very morning on which she had been found murdered.

An investigation of his accounts showed that he had abstracted more than twenty thousand dollars of the girl's legacy.

Taken altogether, this was proof enough of a possible motive, but a more direct proof of his actually having done the deed was coming.

Entangled in the embroidery of the murdered girl's night-robe was found the missing diamond stud.

Of this circumstance he could not give the slightest explanation.

He seemed literally stricken dumb with terror.

His arrest followed, as a matter of course, and he was lodged in jail to await trial.

The verdict of the public was, without exception, against him.

Only one person believed in his innocence, and this was his wife.

Although their married life had been far from a happy one, she could not forget the days when he had loved her, and almost frantic with grief, she sought the aid of a famous private detective.

In this, as in all other mysterious cases, the only way of proceeding was to evolve a theory and then set to work to prove whether or not it was correct.

In this theory the fundamental basis clearly had to be that the accused was innocent.

Who, then, was guilty?

The answer to this question could only be gained by a knowledge of the murdered girl's history.

It was possible that the murder might have been caused by jealousy, revenge, a hundred motives other than that of cupidity, which the government detectives had taken as the true one.

By this time the bodies of the murdered heiress and her attendant had been laid out for interment, and the police authorities had given up their possession of the apartments.

The request of the detective, therefore, that he might be allowed to examine the trunks and property of the dead girl was granted, and he at once began his search.

For a long time his search was fruitless, and he was almost beginning to despair, when in a secret drawer of a portable desk, he found what might develop into a clue.

It was a portrait of a young man of about twenty-seven or eight, a man with a dark, swarthy face and a somewhat evil expression of countenance.

Encouraged by the circumstance, he redoubled his exertions, and was once more rewarded by finding, in an interstice between the drawers, where it had evidently been overlooked, a fragment of a letter.

It was but a few inches square, yet it bore the signature:

"Your husband, Gonsalvo Fernandez."

With these in his hands, the detective jumped to a conclusion at once.

The girl had secretly been married to the writer of the letter, and now wished to ignore the ceremony.

The husband, with his passionate southern blood set on fire by the wrong, had resorted to threats, and at last to murder, for revenge.

Retaining the portrait, his next move was to find out if the original was in the city.

If he were, the case became clear at once; if he were not, it was an additional mystery to be solved.

Inquiring at all the offices of the South American steamships, he at last learned that a man answering to the description had landed about a week previously, and much encouraged by this confirmation of his suspicions, he redoubled his exertions to trace him to his present place of concealment.

At last, after many disappointments, he learned that at the Hotel Espanol, a Cuban named Jose Manuella had been staying for the last two weeks.

His description tallied exactly with that of the man he was after, and he lost no time in proceeding to the hotel.

As he entered, the supposed Cuban was at the clerk's desk, and a moment's glance was sufficient to show him he was the original of the portrait.

Crossing the room with rapid footsteps, he laid his hand on his shoulder.

"You are my prisoner, Gonsalvo Fernandez," he said. "I arrest you for the murder of your wife and her servant."

For a moment the Cuban stood utterly overcome by surprise, but the next a long, keen knife had flashed from his breast, and was poised above the detective's head.

Already the knife was descending, but with a rapid movement the detective stepped aside, striking the prisoner as he did so a blow with the butt of his revolver upon the temple that felled him to the ground.

The next instant handcuffs were locked upon his wrists, and as soon as he recovered consciousness he was placed in a hack and safely lodged in jail.

For a long time he maintained an obstinate silence, but at last he confessed that he was the husband of the murdered girl.

He had married her secretly, and upon her father's death she had sought to deny the fact that she was his wife.

Almost frantic with jealous rage he had followed her to America, and when she still refused to acknowledge him as her husband, had committed the crime.

The diamond stud he had found lying upon the floor, and thinking it might belong to some one in the house, had picked it up and placed it in the lace of her night robe in order to still further divert suspicion.

His precautions had been useless, however, and two months later he suffered death.

Mr. Franklin was at once released from his unjust captivity, and his wife and he, drawn closer together by the terrible calamity that for a time overshadowed them, have ever since lived in rejuvenated love and happiness.

POWER OF PRAYER

EAGER to see her two children, kidnapped from her 16 years ago and just found after a search she never abandoned, Mrs. Ella Barnhart declared that she would mortgage her little home in Los Angeles and go to them at once.

"It was the power of prayer," she said, in telling how, after inquiring from house to house in the cities of many States, she at last discovered the whereabouts of her boy and girl in Oklahoma.

Mrs. Barnhart was living with her husband at Mount Vernon, Mo., when her husband kidnapped the children while she was sick. As soon as she recovered she started the search which lasted for sixteen years.

Current News

1,000,000 IN MEXICO CITY.

The population of Mexico City has increased more than 100 per cent. during the past ten years, according to recent estimates based on statistics which fix the figure at approximately 1,000,000. This is far above the normal increase and is attributed to the influx of persons due to revolutions.

Housing conditions, as a result, are bad and suitable dwellings are at a premium.

DEATH ENDS 60-DAY FAST.

Walter Oliver, son of a wealthy farmer of Selma, Iowa, died recently on the sixtieth day of a self-imposed fast.

Oliver was a conscientious objector and was sent to a Federal penitentiary when he refused to don a uniform at Camp Dodge. Upon his return to his home here, he became a recluse and later entered into a fast, declaring "I will not take food until the Lord blesses me."

$300 IN WOODEN LEG.

On his way to Chicago to buy a mechanical leg to replace the wooden one that he was wearing, Isadore Jerry was brought into court in Milwaukee on a charge of being drunk, and was fined $5 and costs. Since the left leg was cut off by a train four years ago, he had saved up for an artificial limb, he told the court. To prove it he unscrewed the bottom of his wooden stump and pulled from the hole $300 in bills.

MOTHER RABBIT KILLS SNAKE.

That even the timid rabbit will fight in defense of its young was proved by M. E. Dalby of Elk Prairie Township, Ill., who saw a mother rabbit in a life or death conflict with a black snake three feet long. The snake had attacked the nest of young rabbits nearby and the mother had come to their rescue. Dalby went after a club to help the rabbit, but when he returned she had torn the snake in pieces with her claws and sharp teeth.

EXTEND FINGERPRINT SYSTEM TO PORES.

An important adjunct to crime detection is reported from Paris. This new plan supplements the Bertillon system of measurements and fingerprints. It has been found that a man can be traced not by fingerprints alone but by marks on any part of the body. Any of the pores of the skin may be employed. This is the discovery of Dr. Locard, head of the French Police School at Lyons. Criminals often use gloves to foil detectives, but the forearm or the elbow may give a print equally as valuable for identification.

BUILDING EARS FOR CHILD.

An Omaha surgeon performed a second operation at a hospital the other day on the three-months-old son of Mr. and Mrs. C. C. Brown in an effort to build ears for the child.

The operation was to provide a left ear. The first operation, performed weeks ago, was on the right side. Small bits of cartilage on either side of the child's head formed the foundation on which the surgeon made his start. Flesh and skin from other parts of the infant's body are being used in the building process.

LEATHER FROM THE SEA.

Considerable interest is at present being shown in the possibility of utilizing the skins of sharks and porpoises for the making of shoe leather. The Bureau of Standards has completed arrangements to test the comparative durability of upper leather made from shark and porpoise skins as compared with that from calfskin and cowhide. The co-operation of the National Boot and Shoe Manufacturers' Association has been secured in the making of the necessary shoes for the test. It is believed that the results of this investigation will be watched with considerable interest.

JUST LIKE A BROTHER.

It was Mary's birthday and her young man had teasingly told her that he was going to give her a rose for each year of her age. Fearfully Mary waited for his flowers to arrive. She wondered whether he really knew how old she was. But when a basket containing four dozen arrived she breathed a sigh of relief.

That night she thanked him for them. Just as she ended it her little brother came into the room. He went over to the flowers and was studying them fixedly when the young man asked: "Do you think your sister's flowers are pretty?"

"Yes, sir, I do," little brother answered, "but what made you send twenty too many?"

ROULETTE WHEEL DECIDES DRINKS.

Any soda clerk will tell you with disgust of the hesitation with which many customers order their drinks while he waits impatiently. That is why an uptown store has little roulette wheels at each table. Instead of numbers the hand turns to the various flavors and specialties.

"It seems to attract the young boys and girls, especially," said the manager. "They like to spin the wheel to see what to drink. It's an unwritten rule to always carry out the order to which the hand points. Luck is good to me when expensive specialties are drawn, and bad, I suppose, for the fellow that pays the bill."

KEPT VOW 68 YEARS NEVER TO CROSS A RIVER.

John M. Frey, 89 years old, kept a vow sixty-eight years, in which time he never crossed the Mississippi River, though he had lived continuously in St. Louis. Born in Switzerland, and christened there Giovanne Frei, he came to St. Louis at the age of twenty.

The three months' trip in crossing the ocean so disgusted and terrified the young Swiss-Italian that he vowed on reaching St. Louis he never again would trust his body over water. Ferries at St. Louis were succeeded by bridges, but the vow was kept, and he did not cross the river.

ONE INTERVIEW IN 110 YEARS.

The Dalai Lama of Lhasa in Thibet has just given an interview to an electrical engineer. This is the first time that a lama has talked with a European in 110 years. Lhasa is on a plateau, 11,000 feet high, which is perhaps desirable as sanitation is non-existent. Thibet seems to want telegraphic communication with the outside world and there are faint signs of an industrial awakening. Mr. Fairley, a telegraph engineer, had an audience with "His Holiness," who proved to be kindly and very inquisitive. He also visited the Thibetan Council called the "Council of Shapes." A twenty-four course luncheon followed.

FRUIT-GATHERING DEVICE.

To simplify the work of gathering fruit which does not necessarily require hand picking, a canvas-apron device has been invented, which, in appearance, is similar to a large umbrella. It is so arranged that it may be placed about the trunk of a tree, forming a funnel into which apples or oranges are caught as a tree is shaken. In the center of the device is a cloth arranged in such a manner as to break the fall of the fruit as it rolls into the chutes and is discharged in baskets or boxes placed on the ground. The canvas is supported by arms which may be folded over on one side to permit the device, which is mounted on a cart, to be wheeled between the various rows of trees in an orchard.

ALCOHOL FROM TROPICAL JUNGLES.

We clutch at anything as a substitute for gasoline. Professor Whitford of the Yale School of Forestry says that alcohol could be economically manufactured from the moist vegetation of tropical forests and jungles. "The evidence is conclusive," said Professor Whitford, "that the tropical sun has the power to store up more energy in the form of cellulose in a given time than has the temperate sun. If this is in a utilizable form it remains for the ingenuity of man to overcome the difficulties of profitably applying it. With the increasing needs of the nation it is reasonble to expect that sooner or later it will be necessary to utilize more fully the plant resources of the tropics." Professor Whitford said that the annual production of alcohol from the nipa plant in the Philippines was now nearly 3,000,000 gallons and that one distillery there had produced 93 per cent. alcohol at a cost of about 20 cents a gallon, and if operated to full capacity could make it at a cost of 15 cents a gallon.

SWIMMERS DRAGGED TO DEATH BY GIANT EEL.

It is said that there are eels no one can land. Some years ago, says the Rochester Times-Democrat, a giant conger was caught in shallow water off the shores of England. It measured eight feet eight inches in length and weighed 148 pounds. Congers half that size have been known to bite a man's hand in two and to have driven their teeth through the blade of an oar.

In 1913 the champion swimmer of Honolulu was attacked by a giant eel, which dragged him under water and held him there for nearly two minutes. He escaped at last, but at the cost of a finger from his right hand.

Eels attain an immense size in the rivers of New Zealand and have been known to attack bathers. In fact, many cases of drowning are on record where eels have dragged the bather beneath the surface of the water.

AGED WOMAN'S DREAMS.

Mrs. Jane Dupree Glenn, Mound City, Mo., years of age, dreams of her old home in Ohio as she sits in her chair knitting to pass away idle moments.

Alert mentally and reasonably active physically, Mrs. Glenn lives to talk of her younger days in the Buckeye State. The fairly gasps when considering the wonderful transformations that have taken place since she was a girl.

Mrs. Glenn crossed the ocean when she was two years old and that was just 102 years ago. Shortly after arriving in New York City she was taken by her parents on their journey in an ox-cart to Chillicothe, O., where the family first settled.

The trip across the Atlantic Ocean was made in an old-time sailing vessel that was eight weeks on the way. Now Mrs. Glenn hears of the proposal of birdmen to make that same trip through the air in one day. Chillicothe at the time the Glenns settled there was a frontier town and just a short time before their arrival an Indian village. That was in 1819.

A few years later the family moved to Gallia County, O., and the girl was married there to John H. Glenn Jan. 1, 1839. Mrs. Glenn was a native of the Isle of Jersey, located in the English Channel. At the time of her birth it was part of France, but later it was ceded to England.

NEW EYES GIVEN SIGHTLESS RODENTS.

Theodore Koppanyi, a student of the Vienna biologist, Professor Przigran, says he has succeeded in transplanting eyes in fish, frogs, salamanders and other lower animal types so that animals after being blinded by the loss of their own eyes recovered their sight.

Encouraged by his success with cold-blooded animals, he then proceeded to experiment with warm-blooded animals, and was able to graft new eyes in mice and rats and again give them sight. The experiments, to which great importance is attributed owing to the possibility of applying the same methods to human persons with lost or impaired sight, were reported upon at a joint session of the Vienna Ophthalmological and Biological Societies.

CATCHING SNAKES WITH A BANJO.

After a man has spent twenty-eight years of his life catching snakes he knows what he is talking about. Si Foman is 43 years old. He went into the business of catching snakes when he was fifteen. He shows evidence of what the insurance men would call "an extra hazardous vocation" in the shape of seventy-five or more scars, the result of wounds inflicted by the fangs of reptiles. These scars are all over his body—on his legs, one on his jaw, under the eye, when a rattler clipped him and hung one day, while the back of his hands look like crows' nests of scars. He is a colored man and has the appearance of having Indian blood in his veins.

"All snakes," said Si, "like music, and this banjo is the thing I use to catch them with. Suppose I'm in the woods and see a rattlesnake crawl down a gopher hole. I go to the mouth of the hole and play, and pretty soon here comes the old fellow crawling forth. As soon as he gets outside I pick him up and put him in the bag. If he's in the open, coiled under a palmetto leaf, I'm more cautious. About thirty feet off I sit down and play, and the snake quickly uncoils himself and rolls around over the ground as if he enjoyed it. He rattles all the time, but not as loud as he does when he means business and is giving you warning to give him more room. I gradually approach, playing softer and softer, and finally I pick him up about the middle and slip him in the bag and go on looking for another.

"A rattlesnake is the most poisonous of all the snakes in Florida. His bite is sure death unless you have an antidote very handy. I've got an antidote, though, and a bite never troubles me now in the least. It is so efficacious that the wound hardly swells. I went down and spent nearly two years among the Seminoles in the Everglades to get it, and then it was good luck. I was out in the woods one day with Knot-Hole. The old fellow got bitten by a rattlesnake, and he started at once for his antidote. I followed him, for I knew what he was looking for. He tried to conceal the plant by crushing it down with his foot, but I picked it up and told him that was the thing to cure snake bites. He remarked that I was too much of an Indian and must stay always in the Indian camp. The plant not only cures snake-bite, but the stings of all kinds of insects, and it is also said to cure rabies.

"Well, to get back to snakes. There are two kinds of rattlers in Florida. One is the swamp rattler and the other the highlander. The swamp snake has a larger head and a thicker body and is altogether a heavier snake than his highland brother. His coat, too, is darker and his diamonds brighter. He is also more vicious, and gives mighty little time for you to move when he sounds the alarm.

"Rattlesnakes are very easy to tame. Let me handle them for about four days and they know me and make no effort whatever to bite. I don't take the fangs out, for what's the use? In two weeks they grow out again big enough to kill you, and in six weeks are as big as they ever were. I have heard people say that a rattlesnake gets his poison from a plant, but it's all nonsense. It's in them, for I find those a year in captivity are just as deadly as when fresh from the woods.

"The biggest rattlesnake I ever saw I caught up here by Palaka. He was 10 feet 11 inches long, weighed 38 pounds, and had 56 rattles. I had him in a pit there in the yard for a long time. A heavy rain came and filled the pit up with water, and he drowned. I made a vest out of his skin. I'm afraid I'll never get another snake like that," and Si sighed to think what he had lost.

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The feature stories already published in this magazine are worth reading. Here are the latest numbers:

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41 "The Black Soul," by Beulah Poynter.
42 "Sanctuary," by William Hamilton Osborne.
43 "The Mystery of the Seven Shadows," by Charles F. Oursler.
44 "The Sign of the Dragon," by C. Martin Eddy, Jr.
45 "The Magic of Detective Woo Fang," by Frank F. Whitfield.
46 "The Decoy," by William Hamilton Osborne.
47 "The House With 30 Steps" by Ralph D. Porter.
48 "When the Clock Struck 13," by Dr. Harry Enton.
49 "A Piece of Blotting Paper," by Dorothy Weber.
50 "The $200,000 Mystery," by Ethel Rosemon.
51 "The Case of Dr. Brice," by Mary R. P. Hatch.
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HOUSE LIGHTED BY FLOW FROM FAUCET

Prof. Colardeau, head of the physics department in a French university, lights his house with electricity made by the flow of water from an ordinary faucet. Describing his method to the Academie des Sciences in Paris recently, he said that if the water had its source 236 feet higher than the faucet a flow of one quart per second would furnish one-horse power.

Prof. Colardeau mounted a water turbine on the faucet, geared this to a dynamo which sent its electric current into a storage battery. From this he obtained enough current to light a 500-candle-power lamp and several lamps that vary between ten and twenty candle-power.

It is not necessary that the faucet flow all the time. The ordinary use of a kitchen faucet is enough, for the turbine may be installed in such a way that the water can be used after passing through it, and each time the faucet is turned on the turbine sets the dynamo going and the storage battery accumulates the electricity for use as needed.

EFFECTS OF FEAR ON CHILDREN'S HEARTS.

According to Dr. Mabel Elliott, head of the American Woman's Hospitals, who is now serving with the Near East Relief at Ismid, Turkey, a large number of the Armenian children under her care are suffering from enlarged hearts or other forms of heart disease, due to the constant fear to which they have been prey during the past few years.

People living in the Near East have long been familiar with the mental petrification due to the terrible experience through which these children have passed, most of them having forgotten everything of their past, their names, their homes and their language included, but this is the first instance that has been recorded of the effect of fear on their hearts.

The cure which Dr. Elliott is practising with these children is a combination of mental and medical. First of all they are made to realize that they are entirely out of danger and among friends. Then they are put on a special diet of nourishing foods and certain exescises are prescribed. The results so far have been very successful.

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"I had suffered agony for years from rheumatism and associated disorders, and Mrs. Reed was tortured with the demon neuritis almost beyond endurance. We had read and talked so much about 'Uric Acid' that our minds seemed poisoned. But the 'Inner Mysteries of Rheumatism' made it all clear to us and now we are both free from the suffering and misery we endured so many years. I believe I was the hardest man in the world to convert! For me to discard the old 'Uric Acid' theory, and what I now know to be absolutely false, for the new, scientific understanding of the causes and cure of rheumatism, was like asking me to change my religious beliefs! But I did change, and it was a fortunate day for me and mine when I did so."

NOTE: "The Inner Mysteries of Rheumatism" referred to above by Pastor Reed lays bare facts about rheumatism and its associated disorders overlooked by doctors and scientists for centuries past. It is a work that should be in the hands of every man or woman who has the slightest symptoms of rheumatism, neuritis, lumbago or gout. Any one who sends name and address to H. P. Clearwater, 534 F Street, Hallowell, Maine, will receive it by mail, postage paid absolutely free. Send now, lest you forget the address! If not a sufferer, cut out the explanation and hand it to some afflicted friend.

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That I was astonished and happy is expressing my state of mind mildly. Obviously, the hair roots had not been dead, but were dormant in the scalp, awaiting the fertilizing potency of the mysterious pomade.

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STUDY MONKEY'S BRAIN.

Students at the University Medical College, Cincinnati, held an unusual clinic with the body of Tarzan, an "educated" Chimpanzee that died in the Zoo recently of pneumonia. Dr. H. McE. Knower, professor of anatomy, was assisted by D. E. F. Malone, neurologist, who got permission from the Zoo to take the chimpanzee's brain for scientific purposes.

Anatomical slides will be made and sent to every medical college in the United States. The skeleton will be preserved for the anatomical department of the medical college. The skin will be stuffed and exhibited.

Tarzan was 7 years old. He was caught by animal men in the French Congo when 3 years old and taken to London. A showman was attracted by the intelligence of the animal and bought it as a present for his wife. He later kept it in her New York apartments and trained it to eat at the table.

The doctors said an examination of the brain showed every convolution of the human brain excepting size. Its weight was about half that of the human brain.

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